Inafa'Maolek Youth returns with fresh outlook on climate change. PAGE 2
Solar power system for Rota Aquaponics underway. PAGE 3

Hafa Adai!

$1

Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXII, Issue No. 150
www.saipantribune.com FRIDAY JULY 29, 2022 www.facebook.com/saipantribune

Mafnas brings suit to fed court

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Mafnas

Former Division of Customs and Biosecurity director Jose Mafnas has taken his suit against the Department of Finance and its head, David Atalig, to federal court and has also included Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' chief of staff as a defendant.

After previously dropping his lawsuit against DOF and Atalig in in Superior Court, Mafnas has opted to refile his suit with the U.S. District Court for the NMI and added Torres' chief of staff, William

See MAFNAS on Page 4

IPI rep: IH Group late with payments; transfers $245K to IPI

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

To date, Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC's financier, IH Group, has

See IPI on Page 4

Hongtao Su, a representative of Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC's Hong Kong-based parent company, tells the Commonwealth Casino Commission board that their financier, IH Group, has invested or transferred to IPI $245,000 to date during the board's monthly meeting yesterday at CCC's conference room at Springs Plaza in Gualo Rai. IPI adviser Tao Xing served as Su's translator.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Barrier project at Garapan Fishing Base starts

Members of the Garapan Fishing Base Shoreline Project, alongside Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and some lawmakers prepare to shovel sand for the project's groundbreaking ceremony yesterday at the Garapan Fishing Base in Kristo Rai.

CHRYSTAL MARINO

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

A plan to build a protective barrier at the Garapan Fishing Base to reduce erosion and improve water quality in the Saipan Lagoon began yesterday with a groundbreaking ceremony at the site across the Kristo Rai Church.

Heavy rain showers briefly cleared for the groundbreaking ceremony, which was attended by many dignitaries, including Gov. Ralph DLG

See BARRIER on Page 4

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

INSIDE

NATION
A U.S. defense contractor and his wife are charged with using the identities of two dead children.

PAGE 15

OFF THE WALL
A big pink diamond of 170 carats has been discovered, the largest such gemstone found in 300 years.

PAGE 17

LIFE & STYLE
Pop singer Shakira has opted to go to trial instead of accepting a deal offered by Spanish prosecutors.

PAGE 19

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

Inafa'Maolek Youth returns with fresh outlook on climate change

A group of seven high school students who attended the Native Youth Climate Adaptation and Leadership Congress in West Virginia in June have now returned to the CNMI, equipped with new perspectives and promising goals.

The seven students—Angelica Mario (Kagman High School), D'anahlei Rodriguez (Kagman High School), Juneya Quitano (Kagman High School), Melady Manahane (Kagman High School), Kina Rangamar (Marianas High School), Jude Litulumar (Kagman High School), and Richard Lacson (Kagman High School)—represented the CNMI at this nationwide event as Saipan's own Inafa'maolek Youth Ambassadors. Ranging in ages from 16 to 17, the group traveled to West Virginia last June 25, 2022, to attend the Congress, which was hosted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. They were accompanied by their mentors and advisers Eva Aguon Cruz, Jessielyn Quitano, and Rep. Sheila Babauta (D-Saipan).

During their one-week stay at the National Conservation Training Center, the students attended various presentations by native professionals in the field, took part in workshops related to conservation, and even participated in the program's annual river trip, which consisted of paddling 12 miles down the Potomac River. The Congress culminated with youth-led presentations on topics of government policies, indigenous education, language, customs and values, sustainable development, and sustainable agriculture.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Angelica Mario, D'anahlei Rodriguez, Juneya Quitano, Melady Manahane, Kina Rangamar, Jude Litulumar, and Richard Lacson represented the CNMI at the Native Youth Climate Adaptation and Leadership Congress in West Virginia in June as Saipan's Inafa'maolek Youth Ambassadors.

When asked to talk about her experience learning about other native and Pacific island cultures, Mario said: "Our similarities stand out just as much as our differences. We're all facing the same problems with climate change, commercialization, and sustainability. We were all able to educate each other on what steps could be taken to circumvent such obstacles. I hope to be able to implement all that I learned on this trip within my community."

"I have learned so much from this trip. It is genuinely an experience I will never forget." Lei adds, "This experience will forever serve as a highlight of my life and my drive to continuously work towards implementing and improving our local and political systems," Quitano said.

Litulumar said: "Being surrounded by people with many different backgrounds and finding similarities and connections between our traditions and values opened my eyes to a new level of thinking. Now I see myself wanting to know more about our past and wanting to make a positive impact for our future. Coming from an island with a rich history, we have the option to integrate ourselves into modern society while protecting our culture and environment through our indigenous knowledge."

The students also had the

See YOUTH on Page 4

HANA
HEALTH MASSAGE
SERVICES OFFERED
▪ Body (Oil) Massage
▪ Foot Massage (with medicine)
▪ Cupping Therapy (Suction cup massage for back pain)
▪ NEW! Table Shower and Body Scrub Spa - Soon in San Antonio Location
SPECIAL PROMO
▪ 60 minutes Body (Oil) Massage $20
Locations:
▪ MSV Building, Chalan Kanoa across Moonlight
▪ NEW location → San Antonio, across Afetna Super Market
10:00AM TO 12:00AM • Call HANA: 789-7778
WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS

Back to School Sale
10 days only - Aug 12 - Aug 21
20 off clothing
girls' sizes 7 to 16
a boutique for
Tween Girls
ages 8-12
Dresses, Tees, skirts, jeans, shorts, and Accessories!
School
Girl Talk
FISG Bldg., Micro Beach Road, next to Poki Yaki
Monday-Thursday: 10am to 4pm
Friday-Saturday: 10am to 5pm. Closed on Sunday
TEL. 233-8050
Like us on Facebook

Solar power system for Rota Aquaponics underway

The Rota Mayor's Office broke ground last July 22, 2022, for the installation of the Rota Aquaponics Solar Photovoltaic System at the Rota Aquaponic Education and Training Facility in Sinapalo.

Funded by a grant from the DOI Office of Insular Affairs' Energizing Insular Communities, the $153,000 solar energy system project has the capacity to power the current facility's electrical load plus its expansion phases, especially as plans are underway to add additional fish ponds, planting beds and additional office units to support other agricultural-related programs under the Department of Lands and Natural Resources and the municipality, with the end goal of sustainability.

Office of Grants Management administrator Epiphanio E. Cabrera, Jr. expressed appreciation to OIA, Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig, Ivan Mereb, David M. Calvo of DLNR, Gus Maratita from the Aquaponics Facility, Thelma B. Inos from DPW's Division of Energy and CNMI Energy Task Force for the great collaboration and patience with the project, which had started back in 2019. He also acknowledged OGM grants specialist Frankie F. Angel for preparing the grant proposal and for following up with the federal officials on the status of the permits.

According to OGM Cabrera, "much of the delay was due to setbacks caused by COVID-19 and the need to secure federal permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. We weren't able to proceed with the contract's routing, despite going through the entire bidding process, because our office needed the Authorization to Proceed documentation from the federal grantor. The ATP document was received a month ago."

Acting mayor Jonovan H. Lizama thanked OGM, the CNMI Office of the Governor, Division of Energy, and DLNR for their hard work on this project and welcomes more projects and funding to Rota to help its people and community. He highlighted the need for more collaboration with the central government to increase Rota's economic potential.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Rota Mayor's Office broke ground last July 22, 2022, for the installation of the Rota Aquaponics Solar Photovoltaic System at the Rota Aquaponic Education and Training Facility in Sinapalo.

Inos said that the system "is estimated to generate 36 kilowatts of direct current power, which is able to handle about 52,000 kilowatt hours annually. This translates to a savings of about $27,000 annually and $675,000 over the lifespan of the solar energy system at 25 years."

The solar energy system project is scheduled to be completed within 138 days and will be integrated with the net metering system. This grid-tied system will be able to accommodate the entire load of the facility during the day and all other excess energy generated will be exported back to the electrical grid, crediting the aquaponics facility. The system will be installed under contract with Micronesia Renewable Energy Inc.

David M. Calvo, Rota's DLNR resident director, expressed his appreciation to the CNMI Office of the Governor for its support to the island of Rota. "Thank you to the team that's been collaborating with us...the team that always comes to Rota to give us a helping hand, the Governor's Grants Office. I wish that they continue coming to Rota to support us in bringing in more ideas and funding...to continuously reach out and help our community."

In a separate interview, Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres acknowledges the need to make electricity more affordable in the Commonwealth, "This new solar integrated system—quite possibly the first of its kind on Rota—will provide this educational and training facility an opportunity to expand its program and save on electricity in the long run."

Torres said that more solar projects are coming to the CNMI, "and I thank the Rota leadership, the mayor, and Rota community for their patience as the government pursues on expanding the CNMI's renewable energy portfolio with all stakeholders." ***(PR)***

ARMATECH

Automatic Sliding Gate Operator Installer and Repairer

Tel: (670) 234-8895 | Email: armatech.saipan@gmail.com
Mobile: (670) 287-5525 / (670) 783-8895

Guam reports 3 COVID-19-related deaths

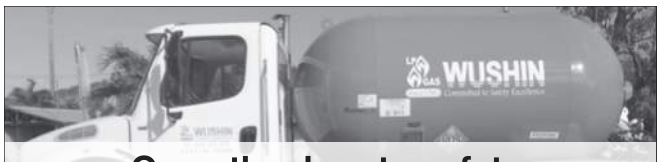
Guam's Joint Information Center announced late Wednesday that the U.S. territory recorded three more COVID-19-related fatalities, bringing the island's death toll from COVID-19 to 380.

According to the JIC, the 378th COVID-19-related fatality was pronounced dead on arrival at the Guam Regional Medical City on July 20, 2022. The patient was a 51-year-old male, fully vaccinated with one booster, with underlying health conditions, who tested positive on July 20.

The 379th COVID-19-related fatality occurred at GRMC on July 22, 2022. The patient was a 54-year-old male, fully vaccinated without a booster, with underlying health conditions, who tested positive on July 18.

The 380th COVID-19-related fatality occurred at GRMC on July 24, 2022. The patient was a 66-year-old male, without a record of vaccination, with underlying health conditions, who tested positive on July 18.

"[First gentleman] Jeff [Cook], [Lt. Gov.] Josh [Tenorio], and I pray for their families, that they may find comfort in their time of grief. The losses are great and our island mourns with their families in their most difficult time," said Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero. "Our community has lost too much to this pandemic. We must get back to basics in order to combat this virus. By doing all we can as individuals, we can build a stronger community. Wear your mask, get vaccinated, stay home if you are sick. The way to keep our most vulnerable loved ones safe is to continue our mitigation measures." ***(Saipan Tribune)***



Open the door to safety:
awareness is the key!
a friendly reminder from
LP GAS WUSHIN
Since1983 Committed to Safety Excellence
For your LPGas needs, please call 322-7415 or 322-8733
Open from 8:00am – 5:00pm Monday to Friday | 8:00am – 2:00pm Saturday

MIDDLE ROAD:
OPEN DAILY — DINE IN & DRIVE-THRU: 6AM - 10PM
TEL. NO.: (670) 235-8577

GARAPAN EXPRESS:
OPEN DAILY — DINE IN & TAKE OUT: 24 HOURS
DRIVE THRU: OPEN 24 HOURS DAILY | TEL: (670) 233-8577

IPI

From Page 1

invested or transferred $245,000 to IPI, according to Hongtao Su, a representative of IPI's Hong Kong-based parent company, during yesterday's meeting of the Commonwealth Casino Commission. IPI earlier reported that it anticipates receiving $150 million from IH Group.

IPI adviser Tao Xing also stated yesterday that IPI has invested more than $1 billion in the CNMI and has contributed over $300 million to government's finances so far.

Su, a Chinese national, talked about IH Group—with Xing acting as his translator—during the public comment portion of the CCC's monthly meeting at the CCC conference room at Springs Plaza in Gualo Rai.

Su was prompted to talk about IH Group's investment after a former IPI employee, Vicente Aldan, told the CCC board that, based on his investigation, IH Group has no money and is a scam.

Su showed to the CCC board a copy of a letter coming from IPI Holdings executive director Chen Feng, authorizing him to represent IPI.

He said IH Group has been late on the payments defined by their agreement.

Su said IPI is trying to be as flexible as much as possible and is giving IH Group more time. However, Su said, he is ready to give the IH Group the final notice and terminate their agreement.

Su said he is an investor who bought a lot of IPI shares and that no one from IPI's investment committee could attend the CCC meeting so he is available to answer some questions and make a few remarks.

Aldan, who is running for a House of Representatives seat representing Precinct 1 as an independent candidate, earlier told the board that did some investigative background checking on IH Group that is claiming to be funding $150 million to bail out IPI. He said he called IH Group's Rota office's phone number, but the number doesn't work. "I don't know where IH Group is because people that I know on Rota don't know where the IH Group is," Aldan said.

He said he had people in South Korea go over to the IH Group's head office and found out that the address is there, but there's no office there that represents the company. "I called the number, nobody answers,"

» Ex-IPI employee Aldan says IH Group a scam

» IPI says it has invested more than $1B, contributes over $300M to CNMI gov't finances

Aldan said.

Aldan said the IH Group Korea's website claims that they have an IH waterpark on Rota that they started building in June 2019 and completed in September 2019. "Who's here has been to Rota who has seen a waterpark that was developed by IH Group? I know I haven't seen one," he said.

He said the website also claimed that they built IH Rota Casino Hotel, a 30-hotel room that started construction in June 2019 and completed in September 2019. "I didn't know Rota has a casino that ha 30 hotel rooms," Aldan said.

He said IH Group also cited that there's a Dream Hotel and Shopping Mall on Rota, in which construction started February 2020 and completed 2022. "I didn't realize that Rota has a shopping mall either," Aldan said.

He said IH Group claimed that they built or renovated the Rota International Airport that has Duty Free Shoppers inside it.

Aldan said that, by just doing this little research, it appears this IH Group is exactly like IPI—it's a scam and they don't have money.

He said he is not sure what is going to happen to IPI's case against CCC before the U.S. District Court for the NMI. "But what I do know is that this IH Group is a scam for whoever's running it, their connection on Rota and IPI. Maybe all my information is wrong, maybe it's right. I don't know. But from what I gathered, I can guarantee you that it is right," Aldan said.

Aldan said IPI is just biding its time as there is no way that its hotel in Garapan will be open and operational this November. He said it will take millions of millions of dollars that IPI does not have to fix the problems in that hotel building.

Aldan said nobody is willing to do any kind of work for IPI because IPI already has a reputation for being untrustworthy. He recommends that CCC conduct a thorough background investigation as to whoever is going to invest in IPI. "And make it public so we don't have another fiasco like IPI," Aldan said.

Su said that Aldan is a former IPI employee who is not happy about IPI and should not badmouth the company.

Su cited IH Group's transfer of $245,000 to IPI and assured that if IH Group does not pay according to their agreement, they will terminate their agreement. He said he wants to get a final result from IH Group.

Su also cited IPI's contributions to the CNMI in terms of taxes, employment created, and community contributions.

Xing said that, since 2014, IPI's cumulative investment in the CNMI has exceeded $1 billion.

Xing said IPI's casino/resort project provided business opportunities to hundreds of local suppliers and, as a result, the CNMI's Gross Domestic Product growth was 3.5% in 2015, 28.3% in 2016, and 25.6% in 2017.

He said IPI created more than 2,000 employment opportunities and helped create the new casino industry from scratch.

Xing said IPI attracted and trained hundreds of gaming talents for the CNMI.

He said IPI contributed more than $300 million to government finances, including $16,280,000 in licenses and fees paid in 2015.

In 2016, Xing said, IPI paid $35,601,000 in taxes and $15,934,000 in licenses and fees; $70,483,000 in taxes and $16,244,382 in licenses and fees in 2017; and $46,349,000 in taxes and $16,391,000 in licenses and fees in 2018.

He said IPI contributed to community and environmental protection that includes hundreds of community reconstruction, cleanup and beautification activities, and community donations of more than $6 million.

He said IPI's promotion of the CNMI included nearly 100 international promotion events, such as the CNMI International Film Festival, International Business Forums, film and TV series shootings and international golf competitions.

CCC board chair Edward C. Deleon Guerrero said they cannot discuss talk further about the matter as the U.S. District Court's temporary restraining order stands and that they are awaiting instructions from their legal counsel.

The chairman said he and the rest of the board members have a lot of questions for IPI, but that they are going to discuss the IPI matter during an executive session.

IPI filed a complaint last May 23 against CCC and obtained from the District Court a TRO prohibiting CCC from moving forward with a hearing on CCC's five cases that seek to revoke IPI's exclusive casino license.

IPI's financier, IH Group representative Kyu Nam Kim, recently told the federal court that a sufficient investment is underway to assure IPI's ability to make the financial commitment required by the settlement agreement.

In extending the TRO, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona noted, among other things, that IPI anticipates receiving $150 million in financing before the end of May 2022 to make payments due to the CCC and other creditors to resume its operations.

The parties then informed the court that they expect to finalize and execute a settlement agreement with CCC by July 18, 2022.

As of yesterday, IPI and CCC said the have not reached a deal as there are issues that go back and forth between the lawyers.

MAFNAS

From Page 1

Castro, as a defendant.

In addition to the complaint, Mafnas, through his counsel, Charity Hodson, has also filed a motion for a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction to prohibiting the defendants from reassigning him or reverting the reassignment while the lawsuit is pending.

For the most part, the complaint remains the same, this time with an additional defendant.

According to the verified complaint, Mafnas is accusing Atalig and Castro of violating his rights and due process of law, specifically his right to freedom of speech and freedom of association.

"Defendant Secretary of Finance and defendant Castro discriminated and retaliated against plaintiff for exercising his constitutional right to freedom of association with a different political gubernatorial ticket than the incumbent governor. Defendant Secretary of Finance engaged in patronage by issuing his decision to 'reassig' plaintiff, which was an adverse employment action because of plaintiff's political association. Defendant Secretary of Finance's and defendant Castro's actions were motivated by evil motive or intent, or involved reckless or callous indifference to the rights of plaintiff," Hodson argued.

Hodson also alleged that Castro and Atalig caused and/or threatened to demote or change Mafnas' civil service classification, with intent to discourage or encourage him to support a candidate for public office and/or a political party.

Mafnas' lawyer explained her client is an open supporter of the independent Palacios-Apatang gubernatorial ticket, which is running against Torres.

"In the recent months leading up to his effective termination, plaintiff has been publicly supporting the incumbent governor's gubernatorial opponent outside of the work place by appearing at events, fundraisers, and roadside wavings," she said.

However, Mafnas' constitutional right to vote freely and to associate as he sees fit has also been under fire for months since his public support of the governor's opponent, Hodson said.

"On or about May 22, 2022, plaintiff's niece, sent a message to…Castro regarding statements made by Castro about terminating Mafnas' employment. When plaintiff engaged the incumbent governor's chief of staff, on or about May 22…Castro replied: 'Director, [I've] been a winner and a loser. But I've never lost a civil service battle.' The same day, the plaintiff was given an adverse order by Secretary of Finance Atalig appointing [an] Officer 1 as acting director, bypassing several experienced management officers in Customs. The now-acting director is a close relative of the incumbent governor's running mate," Hodson said.

The court has yet to make a ruling or set a hearing date on the motions filed.

BARRIER

From Page 1

Torres, who said the groundbreaking is "another day of success, another day of progress with the administration…another day for the CNMI." He noted that the project will be beneficial for residents and tourists alike.

The project will take place from the south side of the boat launching ramp and will cover over 300 feet of the shoreline. Federally funded by the National Marine Fisheries Services for $646,000, the Garapan Fishing Base Shoreline Project will involve the construction of a 380-foot rock revetment along the land-lagoon interface of the Garapan Fishing Base. The rock revetment will help prevent both natural- and catastrophic-caused erosion, and protect one of the best commercial and recreational fishing spots on island.

The Department of Lands and Natural Resources is handling the project. "This is part of our future plans... of what we are building in this area," said DLNR Secretary Anthony Benavente yesterday.

Benavente said there are plans for an open market in the area, as well as a possible marina. The governor also believes the site would be ideal for an amusement park.

Noting future developments in the area, Benavente also expressed the importance of efforts to preserve certain on-site landmarks, including the existing pier.

The project's main contractor is USA Fanter Corp. Ltd.

Steve Qian, the owner of USA Fanter Corp., who was also present at the groundbreaking ceremony, told the press that the contract had been signed for over a year now, but had been on hold due to processing permits, but now, with that complete the project is ready to begin. Qian said the estimated time is about 300 days. The completion date for the project is set for May 21, 2023.

YOUTH

From Page 2

opportunity to tour Washington D.C. and pay a visit to Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan's office, and ask questions related to Sablan's work and the issues they had discussed at the NYCALC.

The last leg of this trip was Oahu, where students were exposed to the island's renowned sustainability practices, urban development and Pacific history. The hroup visited Ka'ala Farms in Waianae, an estate that serves as an agricultural and cultural learning center. During the visit, students learned of the farm's rich history, traditional farming practices, and natural water systems. The farm aims to empower the community by keeping Native Hawaiian customs relevant and providing a sustainable and accessible food source in the area.

"Being exposed to other cultures and environments gave us all a new perspective to our own home and identity," Rangamar said. "I've never felt so supported about a passion to solve issues within my community until getting involved with this project and organization, I'm so grateful for that."

The group's sponsors who made this trip possible included Babauta, Sen. Karl King-Nabors, Rep. Edmund Villagomez, Sen. Justo Quitugua, Rep. Ralph Yumul, Sen. Teresita Santos, Rep. Angel Demapan, Christine Kaipat, Angelo Villagomez, Bryan Benjamin and Bank of Guam.

Inafa'maolek Youth is a youth heritage and empowerment program under the non-profit organization *Manhita Marianas*, and the NYCALC youth delegation is supported in partnership with the Office of Representative Sheila Babauta and the Friends of the Marianas Trench. If you would like more information about how to support this cause, email inafamaolekyouth@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

Bill seeks to erase criminal records of some pot, firearms-related offenders

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Celina R. Babauta has introduced a bill, House Bill 22-110, that would provide a way to erase or completely remove the criminal records of certain marijuana and firearms-related offenders.

Babauta, who chairs the House of Representatives Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee, noted that numerous U.S. jurisdictions, including many that have already legalized cannabis use, have passed legislation permitting expungement of criminal records for cannabis possession or distribution. The Commonwealth legalized cannabis or marijuana for recreational use, with the enactment of Public Law 20-66.

Babauta

Babauta, said that, in keeping with the movement in the CNMI and nationally toward criminal justice reform, rehabilitation, and restorative justice, expungement of marijuana possession conviction serves the interest of reducing carceral and punitive approaches to public health problems.

Babauta said Public Law 19-73 repealed the Weapons Control Act in force prior to the application of the District of Columbia v. Heller case interpretation of the Second Amendment by the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

However, she said, Public Law 19-73 did not provide for extinguishing criminal liability that attached under the repealed statutes. Babauta said offenders convicted under the repealed statutes should have recourse to expunge their convictions.

Under Babauta's legislation, upon motion from a person convicted of marijuana arising from a set of facts and circumstances that resulted in no other criminal charge, the court shall grant an expungement order pertaining to the conviction for the offense, provided that the amount of marijuana for which the person was convicted of possessing was 30 grams or less.

Upon motion from a person convicted for a weapon control offense arising from a set of facts and circumstances that resulted in no other criminal charges, the court shall grant an expungement order pertaining to the conviction for the offense.

MVA, CAO, IAO to launch Hafa Adai-Tirow cultural experience in August

To provide visitors and residents a cultural experience highlighting indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian culture, the Marianas Visitors Authority, Carolinian Affairs Office, and Indigenous Affairs Office will launch the "Hafa Adai-Tirow Tuesdays and Thursdays" in August in Saipan's main tourist district.

The event will be held from 5pm to 9pm at the CAO grounds in Garapan, Saipan, and will feature Chamorro and Carolinian live entertainment, arts and crafts by Chamorro and Carolinian artists, and food sales that will include indigenous dishes. Hafa Adai-Tirow Tuesdays and Thursdays will kick off with a soft opening on Tuesday, Aug. 2, and Thursday, Aug. 4, with an official grand opening on Aug. 9.

"We are eager and grateful to partner with the Carolinian Affairs Office and the Indigenous Affairs Office on this event, which we're sure our visitors will love once the word spreads," said MVA managing director Priscilla M. Iakopo. "Our visitors are looking for authentic cultural experiences and nighttime activities, and this event aligns perfectly with MVA's Strategic Plan 2020-2030 to promote indigenous culture. We are also sharing details with local tour agents so they can bring their guests by." ***(MVA)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

4.6-magnitude earthquake northwest of Saipan

At 3:25pm on July 25 2022, a report of a 4.6-magnitude earthquake occurred 259 km northwest of Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. Currently, no tsunami warnings or advisories were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information, contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 237-8000. (PR)

University of Guam Regent Nominating Council meeting

The regular meeting of the University of Guam Regent Nominating Council is re-scheduled for 3pm on Thursday, Aug. 4, in the Jesus and Eugenia Leon Guerrero Business and Public Administration Building, Room 262, on the University of Guam campus.

A broadcast of the meeting via video livestream will be available on the UOG YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/uogtritons.

The University of Guam complies with Guam Public Law 36-34 changes to the Open Government Law and Guam Public Law 24-109 with reference to the provisions and requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. For special accommodations, please contact the ADA coordinator at (671) 735-2244 or (TTY) (671) 735-2243. Live closed captioning is available through a website link provided within the online meeting. ***(PR)***

FOUL WEATHER CHRYSTAL MARINO

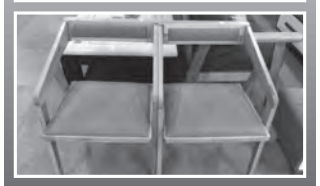
Several areas in Susupe were flooded due to constant downpour Tuesday evening. The bad weather prompted the CNMI Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency to issue a series of flood watch advisories. The National Weather Service in Guam attributed the downpour to a weather circulation located west of the Marianas. It said that heavy showers and a few thunderstorms extend from near the center to the east of the Marianas within a generally southerly flow.

Hafa Adai & Tirow!
Our Oleai store will be
closing early today,
July 29, 2022 at 4PM.
Regular hours of operation will
resume on Monday.
For immediate assistance, chat online
with a representative at ite.net or call
(670) 682-4483.
We apologize for the inconvenience.
IT&E
ite.net itecnmi itecnmi

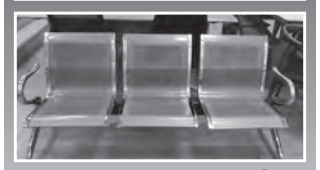
GUANGDONG HARDWARE
Never satisfied until you are

NEW ARRIVAL
LAVATORY FAUCET, MIRROR, GARDEN TOOLS, G.I. PIPES, SQUARE TUBES, SHORING JACK PIPE, ROOFING TIN & MANY MORE ABS, CPVC, PVC, CONDUIT PIPES & FITTINGS ARE ALL MADE IN USA ELECTRICAL TOOLS, WATER HEATER & WINDOWS

NEW ARRIVAL
Furniture



Make a Difference for Your House!



NEW ARRIVALS!
VALSPAR PAINT
It's the suitable paint for the island climate. Makes your paint last for a long time!

LED LIGHTS
• Less money, 50% energy saving!
• More stable, bright, and fashionable!
• More longer and environmental protection!
Your Smart Choice!

G60 Rebar is Available Now!
CHEAPEST DEALER OF MAJOR CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL ON ISLAND!

P.O. BOX 501640, SAIPAN, MP 96950
TEL: (670) 288-2288/2289/6688
FAX: 288-4488
E-mail:guangdong_hardware@163.com
BUSINESS HOURS:
Monday to Saturday
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
DISCOVER MasterCard VISA

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-22-035

FINANCIAL AND COMPLIANCE AUDIT FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2022, 2023 & 2024

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) requires the services of a U.S. Certified Public Accounting Firm/Individual with knowledge, skill, and experience in auditing (1) financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and auditing standards of the U.S. and; (2) federal awards programs in accordance with the Single Audit Act and U.S. Office of Management and Budget requisites.

- Provide assistance to the CUC management with the preparation of the annual financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America
- Ensure that the financial statements and auditor's reports also meet any specific requirements contained in agreements or other contractual requirements relative to financial statement presentation and the audits.
- Submit the draft financial statements and accompanying auditor's reports to CUC management no later than January 31st of each year, and issue the final reports no later than February 28th of each year.
- Provide 15 bound copies of the final financial statements and accompanying auditor's report
- Provide an electronic copy (e.g., .pdf format) of the final report to the CUC.

Auditors are responsible to review the 2022, 2023 & 2024 financial statements to include the physical CUC assets for each fiscal year.

The RFP package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 for one RFP package set.

One (1) original and five (5) hard copies, along with an electronic copy of the proposal on a compact disk in PDF format must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked ***"CUC-RFP-22-035, Financial and Compliance Audit for Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2022, 2023 & 2024"*** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **August 3, 2022 at 10:00 AM (ChST)**. Submissions, in PDF, must also be emailed to the addresses as noted in the RFP. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible offerors who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Offerors shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity to discussion and revision of proposals, and such revision may be permitted after submission and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offers. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing offerors.

All Offeror are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Offeror are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on July 20, 2022** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Greg Cruz, CUC Chief Financial Officer, via email address greg.cruz@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan, CUC Senior Purchasing Technician via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

CHRETIEN T. VOERG
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Northern Marianas Humanities Council
Navigating the Human Experience

Board Vacancy Announcement

CNMI residents are invited to express their interest in serving as a Board member for the Northern Marianas Humanities Council (Council). The Council is a non-profit, private corporation affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities whose mission is to navigate and explore the human experiences of the indigenous and diverse peoples of the Commonwealth by enriching their lives through research, dialogue, programs, and publications.

The Council's Board is comprised of thirteen volunteer members who serve three-year terms. The Council strives to maintain a board that reflects a broad cross section of our CNMI community and consider the following factors: humanities expertise, fiscal and fundraising expertise, geographical coverage, demographic diversity, and attendance at a post-secondary institution. The ideal candidate will have a strong desire to promote the Council's mission, programs, and activities and to actively participate in fundraising activities. Board responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Attending regular Council meetings four times annually;
- Raising funds for Council programs;
- Recruiting community partners;
- Promoting awareness about the Council's mission and its programs in the community;
- Attending Council programs and activities;
- Participating in working committee meetings;
- Evaluating Council programs and activities;
- Reviewing grant applications;
- Providing input about the humanities from various community members, and
- Attending conferences, workshops and other meetings on behalf of the Council.

Applicants are invited to submit their letters of interest and resumes to **Dr. Bobby J.A. Cruz, Chair**, Northern Marianas Humanities Council at Post Office Box 506437 Saipan, MP 96950, delivered to the Council's office located in the Springs Plaza Building in Gualo Rai, Saipan, or via email to: info@nmhcouncil.org. For additional information, please contact the Council's Executive Director, Leo Pangelinan, at telephone 235-4785 or visit the Council's website at www.nmhcouncil.org.

PSS' Project HALIGI Aware welcomes summer interns

Project HALIGI AWARE/ PSS Mental Health Program welcomed 23 new mental health interns from Saipan, Tinian, and Rota at Cha Cha Ocean View Middle School from June 27 to June 30.

The summer interns were introduced to the PSS Mental Health Program during this four-day onboarding session. These mental health interns were responsible for supporting summer schools on all three islands.

Throughout the summer months, these interns were to provide mental health support to promote positive social, emotional, and behavioral skills, and the overall wellness for students enrolled in summer school programs.

The 23 interns were taught how to be effective in their roles, about social-emotional processes, mental health terminologies, strategies to support and deal with real-life situations in the classroom, and paths of solutions in the day-to-day work life. The interns were also guided through their daily routines on the job, including social emotional learning lesson plans and presentations.

Walter Mendez, the Local Education Agency Community Project manager for Saipan, led the Nearpod Walkthrough to introduce an online platform that interns used to promote SEL in the classroom. The interns were taught how to launch presentations and how to use their devices to engage student participation.

Vannah Hocog, behavioral specialist for Rota, shared a presentation on SEL Competencies, which was broken down into self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, social awareness, and relationship skills. These five types of competencies will enable the interns to communicate to students how they can integrate these skills with real-life situations.

"We are beyond excited to share these opportunities to our student interns," said mental health specialist Jericho Tobias. "After all that our students in the CNMI have endured throughout the past six years, these conversations are becoming more important for students so that they are aware of the support available to them."

Mendez is optimistic about the "personal growth each of the interns will experience working with and assisting the students. As educators, we understand that the highest level of learning is teaching. Giving these young adults this experience allows them to learn at the highest level as facilitators and ambassadors of mental wellness."

Throughout the four-week program, PSS Mental Health and its new summer interns have presented multiple social-emotional lesson sessions to different classrooms within the elementary, middle and high schools. They were also able to integrate multimedia with the use of the presentation tool, Nearpod, into their lessons to engage students with the use of technology. ***(PR)***

MICRONESIAN LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION
JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

MLSC is seeking applications for the position of ***Paralegal****, who will work at our office on Saipan, which is located in Chalan Piao.*

Paralegal

Qualifications:

• Shall have such training, background, and interests so that the applicant, under attorney supervision, can assist MLSC clients with basic legal matters and engage in community outreach and education efforts. Salary depending on experience.

Duties Include:

Under the supervision of the office's Directing Attorney,

- Interview applicants and clients, assess their needs and their legal issues;
- Make referrals, provide legal advice and brief services;
- Participate in office decisions regarding case acceptance;
- Manage an active caseload;
- Investigate facts and research the law;
- Prepare pleadings, motions, other legal documents;
- Negotiate on behalf of clients when appropriate;
- Conduct outreach and community education;
- Participate in community liaison activities.
- Perform related duties as required.

Compensation and Benefits:

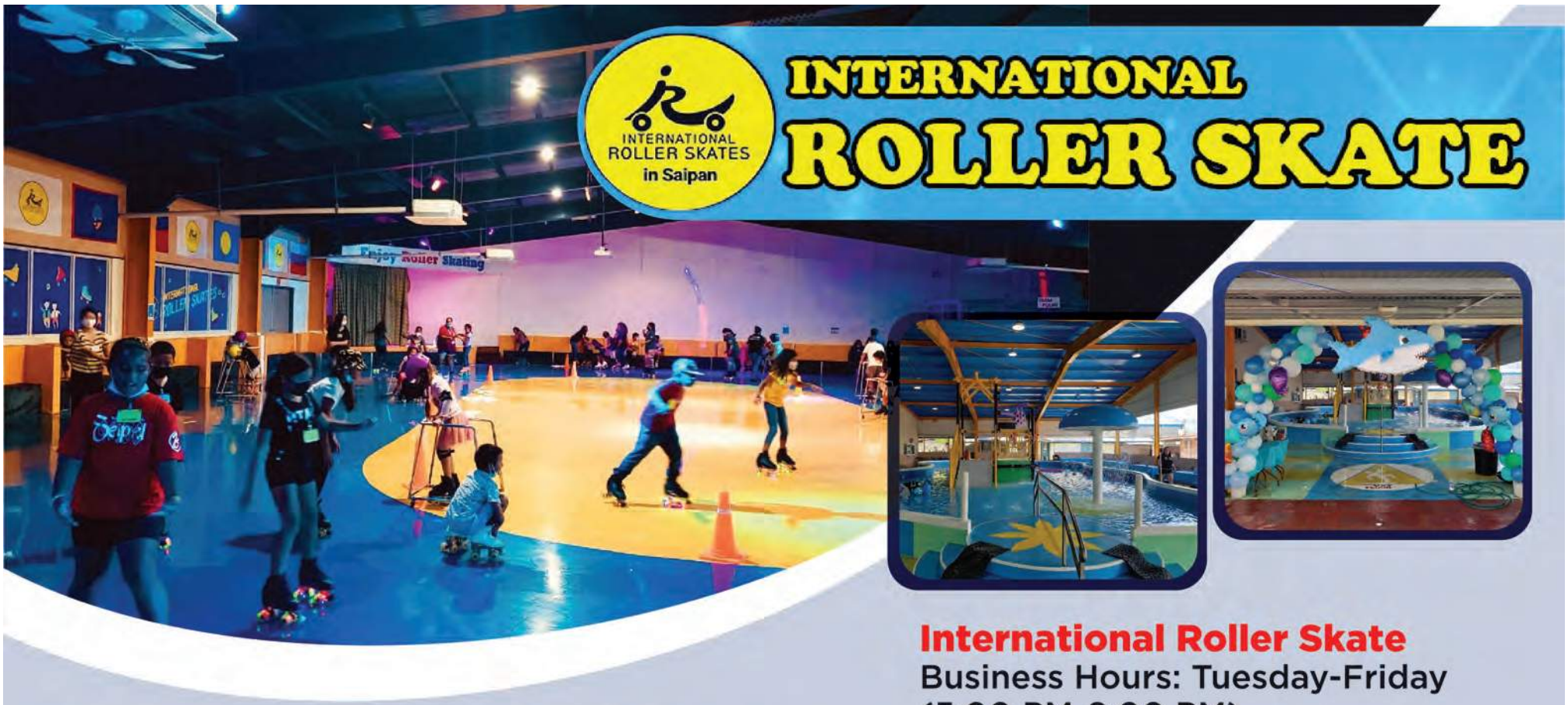
Annual salary from $27,000, higher depending on experience, and generous benefits.

To apply:

Please submit a resume and cover letter to the Directing Attorney Jane Mack via email: janemack@mlscnet.org

Position is open until filled.

MLSC is an Equal Opportunity Employer

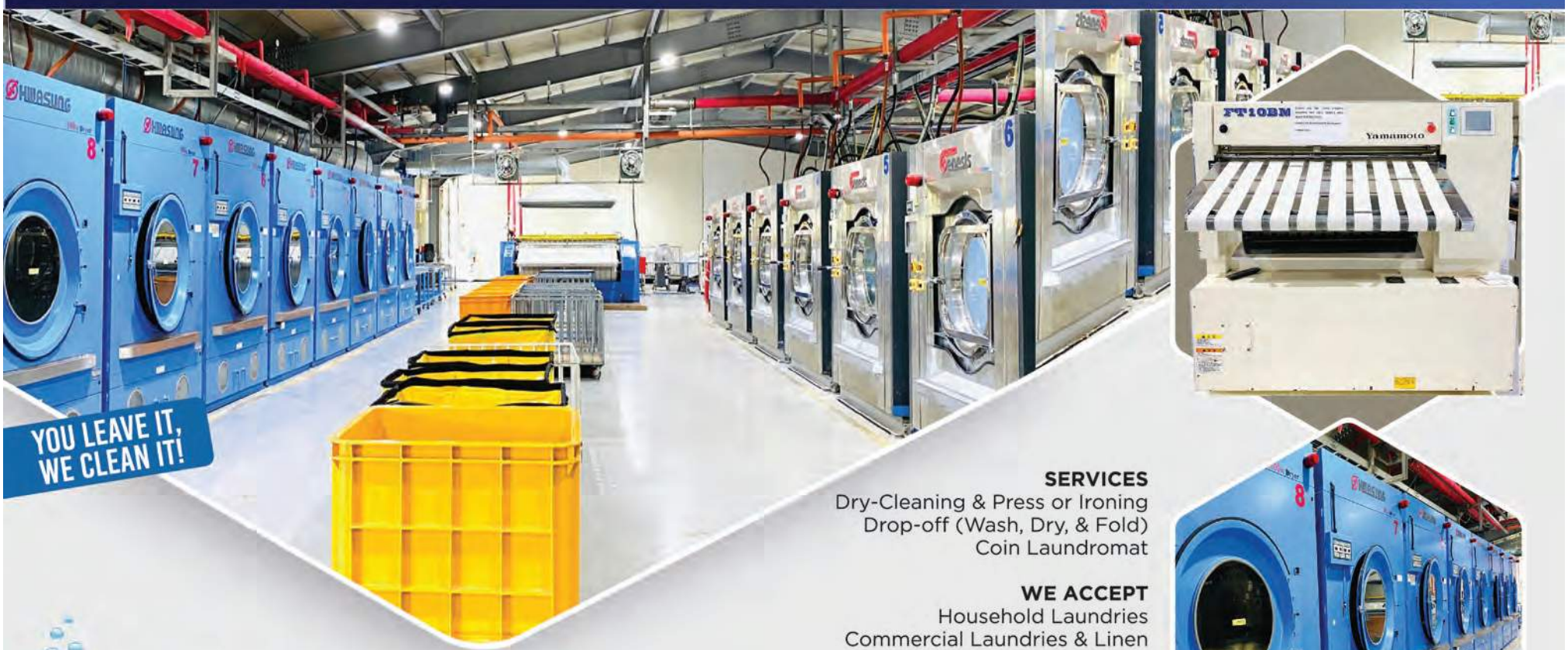


International Roller Skate
Business Hours: Tuesday-Friday
(5:00 PM-8:00 PM)
Saturday-Sunday
(2:00 PM-9:00 PM)

Indoor Water Playzone
Business Hours: Tuesday- Friday
(5:00 PM-6:30PM)
Saturday- Sunday (1:30 PM-6:30 PM)

WE ACCEPT PRIVATE PARTY

Contact Information: (670) 235-3313 & (670) 235-2560
Email Address: saipanwinners15@gmail.com
Facebook: International Roller Skates- Saipan
Instagram: rollersk8_saipan



SERVICES
Dry-Cleaning & Press or Ironing
Drop-off (Wash, Dry, & Fold)
Coin Laundromat

WE ACCEPT
Household Laundries
Commercial Laundries & Linen
Services for Hotels
Restaurants, Hospital or Clinics
Airlines, Churches
& Special Laundry needs

ITEMS
Uniforms for Schools, Military, Law enforcement
& Cadets, Pilots & Stewardess, Athletes
Curtains, towels, bathrobes, Gowns &
Party Dresses, Wedding Dress, Suits
Comforters, Blankets, & Beddings, Carpets

PacificEco
& P&A Laundry

A TOTAL LAUNDRY SOLUTION

We offer full laundry services that will meet
customer's household and commercial laundry needs

Business Hours: Monday~Sunday: 6:00am ~ 10:00pm
Tel No. (670) 235-0085 & (670) 235-7354

There's nothing more relaxing than seeing your laundry basket empty!

Int'l Economic Dev't Council meets with CNMI stakeholders

As part of the CNMI Small Business Development Center's efforts to promote economic growth, the CNMI SBDC at the Northern Marianas College recently met with members from the International Economic Development Council in order to discuss ways to provide technical assessment and capacity building services to the CNMI.

IEDC, through funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, is offering these services to the CNMI through March 31, 2024. This program is focused on both natural disaster and COVID-19 recovery, as well as building economic resilience to future disruptions.

Throughout the project, IEDC will conduct one team visit and a needs assessment report, six to eight technical assistance projects (on-site or virtual), and two virtual trainings.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The CNMI Small Business Development Center at Northern Marianas College, together with the CNMI Department of Commerce and various local stakeholders met with the International Economic Development Council in order to discuss ways to provide technical assessment and capacity building services to the CNMI. In photo from left is Ivan Mereb, Victor Garza, Mercilynn Palec, Jo Anna Ada, Ginny Gilliam, Delaney Luna, Nadine Deleon Guerrero, Aubry Hocog, Jonovan Lizama, Brett Doney, David Atalig, Dean Manglona, and Manny Camacho.

As part of the first visit in the CNMI, the team gathered information on the CNMI's experiences during COVID-19, and the lasting effects of Super Typhoon Yutu, identified economic recovery and resilience priorities through meetings with community partners, private sector, and government agencies.

In addition, CNMI SBDC, the CNMI Department of Commerce, and the IEDC team met with small business owners, farmers, and community partners on the island of Rota. The team also met with Division of Land and Natural Resources director David Calvo, who oversees the heritage coffee farming operation, a pilot program supported by DLNR on Rota.

"We are excited to welcome IEDC to Rota to assist in their assessment of our island's needs," Calvo said.

The team also met with Rota Chamber of Commerce's Steven McCoy and Jackie Manglona to discuss the immediate goals of the RCC and how IEDC could be of assistance. The agencies also met with Francisco Atalig (Atalig Farm, Teteto), Maria Fujihira (Fujihira Farm, Teteto), Prudencio Manglona (Manglons Farm, Sinapalo I).

After its first visit, IEDC will propose recommendations for technical assistance and capacity building, including but not limited to small business development and entrepreneurship, sustainable tourism recovery, technology-led rural development, economic diversification, and workforce development.

The IEDC is a non-profit membership organization serving economic developers. With more than 5,000 members, IEDC is the largest national and global organization of its kind. More information about IEDC can be found at https://www.iedconline.org/.

The CNMI SBDCN is composed of the CNMI SBDC lead center on Saipan, the Rota SBDC, and Tinian SBDC. CNMI SBDCN is partially funded by a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration and NMC. Contact your local SBDC at P.O. Box 501250 Saipan, MP 96950, Tel: (670) 237-6888, or email mercilynn.palec@marianas.edu. ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY(CPA)
CNMI GOVERNMENT
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950 • Phone: (670) 237-6500 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
Website: www.cnmiports.com

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA) is inviting qualified contractors to submit their qualifications and bid proposals for the TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT PARKING LOT EXPANSION PROJECT, PROJECT NO. CPA-TA-001-20, OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS.

Bidders are to submit one original and two copies of their bid which shall be sealed in an envelope and marked on the cover package outside as follows: ***"Tinian International Airport Parking Lot Expansion Project, CPA-TA-001-20"*** and submitted on or before **2:00 p.m., FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2022**, to the Office of the Executive Director, 2nd floor of the Arrival Terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, at which time and place the sealed proposals will be publicly opened and read.

The Project, in general, consists of construction of additional parking spaces including all associated work, all in accordance with the Plans and Specifications.

The Project is being financed by funds by CPA. The contract award, if it is to be made, will be made within one hundred twenty (120) calendar days from the receipt of bids. CPA reserves the right to hold such bids in effect for one hundred eighty (180) calendar days from the date of bid opening.

A DVD containing the Contract Documents including plans, specifications and the bid schedule, may be obtained at the CPA Accounting Office, 2nd floor of the Departure Terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, upon the payment of **ONE HUNDRED FIFTY U.S. DOLLARS ($150.00)** for each DVD. The payment is nonrefundable. Payment shall be made in cash, credit card, cashier's check or U.S. postal money order payable to the Commonwealth Ports Authority. Bidders should notify CPA's point of contact mentioned below immediately if there are issues retrieving the files on the DVD and should verify all information using the specification table of contents and the index of drawings.

A pre-bid conference will be held at the Tinian International International Airport Departure Terminal, at **10:00 AM, FRIDAY, AUGUST 19, 2022**, to explain and clarify any questions regarding this project. A site visit will follow the pre-bid conference. This pre-bid is not mandatory. For site visits after the pre-bid conference, bidders are to coordinate with Mr. Antonio Borja, CPA's Tinian Ports Manager at alborja@cnmiports.com or telephone number (670) 433-9294.

Questions should be submitted in writing to the CPA Executive Director's Office, 2nd floor of the Arrival Terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or emailed to Ms. Wendi L. Prater, Executive Assistant/Project Manager at wprater@cnmiports.com at least ten (10) days prior to the bid opening date, with the exception of extension requests which have no deadline. Responses to all questions and requests for information will be provided to all bidders who purchased a DVD and attended the pre-bid conference.

Each bid proposal shall be on a form furnished by the Commonwealth Ports Authority and available on the DVD. Each bidder must also supply all supplemental information required in the specifications.

The contract period for construction of the project in its entirety shall be **Two Hundred Forty (240) calendar days**. Liquidated damages in the amount of **Five Hundred ($500.00) Dollars** shall be assessed the Contractor for each calendar day that the completion of the Project is delayed beyond beyond the contract completion date without approved excuse.

The apparent low bidder will be subject to a thorough and comprehensive review of its qualifications and Bid Documents to ensure that they are "responsive and responsible." This review will include, but is not necessarily limited to previous project experience, financial capabilities, quality of equipment and personnel, and bonding and insurance. If the apparent low bidder is found not to be "responsive or responsible", their bid will be rejected and the next lowest bidder will be evaluated for qualifications.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals submitted for: (a) any of the reasons set forth in this Notice to Bidders; or (b) any of the reasons set forth in the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations regarding bid rejection or cancellation; (c) any calculation error made in the bid schedule or misenter of the quantity of line item; or (d) sufficient justification exists that awarding the project contract would not be in the best interest of CPA. CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said bids if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest.

Each bid shall be accompanied by either a bid bond by a U.S. Treasury listed or CPA approved surety company, a certified check, or a cashier's check in the amount not less than ten percent (10%) of the bid price. Checks shall be made payable to the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

All mechanics and laborers for this procurement project shall be paid no less than the minimum wage rate established by the CNMI or the U.S. Secretary of Labor, whichever is higher. A copy of the Department of the Federal Labor Wage Rate Determination is included in Section GP 70-28 of the specifications. Bidders shall take into account minimum wage increases that may be imposed in the CNMI over the life of the Contract and include associated costs in the bid proposal. The EEO requirements, labor provisions, and wage rates are included in the specifications.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 USC §§ 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders or offerors that it will affirmatively ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award.

The United States Secretary of Transportation has granted the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands an exemption from the requirements of the Department of Transportation's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) regulation, which later became the Department of Transportation's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program, as it relates to FAA grant programs. The Secretary of Transportation has not determined that a portion of those requirements should be reinstated.

By submitting a bid/proposal under this solicitation, the bidder or offeror certifies that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred or suspended by any Federal department or agency from participation in this transaction.

In addition to the above, all bidders shall comply with all other local and Federal requirements as outlined in the specifications.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY:

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Date: July 20, 2022

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA)
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950 • Phone: (670) 237-6500 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
www.cnmiports.com

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA) is inviting qualified contractors to submit bid proposals and their qualifications for the **FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT COMMUTER TERMINAL BUILDING CONSTRUCTION, PROJECT NO. CPA-SA-007-19,** for the island of Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Bidders are to submit one original and two copies of their bid which shall be sealed in an envelope and marked on the cover package outside as follows: Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport Commuter Terminal Building Construction, Project No. CPA-SA-007-19 and submitted no later than **2:00 P.M. (CHST), Friday, AUGUST 26, 2022,** to the Office of the Executive Director, 2nd floor of the Arrival Terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, at which time and place the sealed proposals will be publicly opened and read. Bidders are requested to minimize their company's attendees to ensure social distancing.

The Project, in general, consists of, but is not limited to, construction of a new commuter terminal facility with four (4) airline offices and counter space, restaurant vendor space, restrooms for departure and arrivals, lactating room, office space/counter for U.S. Customs and Border Protection including all associated work, all in accordance with the Plans and Specifications. In addition, the contractor is provided an allowance for artwork to be provided at the new commuter terminal. The artwork will be locally themed including, but not limited to, painting, murals, or as determined and coordinated with CPA.

The Project is being financed by funds by the Commonwealth Ports Authority. The contract award, if it is to be made, will be made within one hundred twenty (120) calendar days from the receipt of bids. CPA reserves the right to hold such bids in effect for one hundred eighty (180) calendar days from the date of bid opening.

A DVD containing the Contract Documents including plans, specifications and the bid schedule, may be obtained at the CPA Accounting Office, 2nd floor of the Departure Terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, upon the payment of **THREE HUNDRED U.S. DOLLARS ($300.00)** for each set of plans and documents in electronic form (DVD). The payment is nonrefundable unless bids are cancelled. Payment shall be made in cash, credit card, cashier's check or U.S. postal money order payable to the Commonwealth Ports Authority. Bidders should notify CPA's point of contact mentioned below immediately if there are issues retrieving the files on the DVD and are to verify all information using the specification table of contents and the index of drawings.

A pre-bid conference will be held at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, at **10:00 A.M. (CHST), FRIDAY, AUGUST 12, 2022,** at the CPA Saipan Airport Conference Room to explain and clarify any questions regarding this project. Attendance is not mandatory. A site visit will follow the pre-bid conference. For site visits after the pre-bid conference, bidders are to coordinate with Mr. Edward B. Mendiola, CPA's Deputy Director at edmendiola@cnmiports.com or telephone number (670) 237-6500.

Questions should be submitted in writing to the CPA Executive Director's Office, 2nd floor of the Arrival Terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or emailed to Ms. Wendi L. Prater, Executive Assistant/Project Manager at wprater@cnmiports.com at least ten (10) days prior to the bid opening date; with the exception of bid opening extension requests which have no deadline. Responses to all questions and requests for information will be provided to all bidders who picked up a DVD or attended the pre-bid conference.

Bidders shall use the bid schedule form furnished by the Commonwealth Ports Authority on the DVD. Each bidder must also supply all supplemental information required in the specifications.

The contract period for construction of the project in its entirety shall be **FIVE HUNDRED FORTY (540) calendar days.** Liquidated damages in the amount of **ONE THOUSAND ($1,000.00) Dollars** shall be assessed the Contractor for each calendar day that the completion of the Project is delayed beyond beyond the contract completion date without approved excuse.

The apparent low bidder will be subject to a thorough and comprehensive review of its qualifications and Bid Documents to ensure that they are "responsive and responsible." This review will include, but is not necessarily limited to previous project experience, financial capabilities, quality of equipment and personnel, and bonding and insurance. If the apparent low bidder is found not to be "responsive or responsible", their bid will be rejected and the next lowest bidder will be evaluated for qualifications.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals submitted for: (a) any of the reasons set forth in this Notice to Bidders; or (b) any of the reasons set forth in the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations regarding bid rejection or cancellation; (c) any calculation error made in the bid schedule or misenter of the quantity of line item; or (d) sufficient justification exists that awarding the project contract would not be in the best interest of CPA. CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said bids if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest.

Each bid shall be accompanied by either a bid bond by a U.S. Treasury listed or CPA approved surety company, a certified check, or a cashier's check in the amount not less than ten percent (10%) of the bid price. Checks shall be made payable to the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

All mechanics and laborers for this procurement project shall be paid no less than the minimum wage rate established by the CNMI or the U.S. Secretary of Labor, whichever is higher. A copy of the Department of the Federal Labor Wage Rate Determination is included in Section GP 70-28 of the specifications. The bidder shall take into account minimum wage increases that may be imposed in the CNMI over the life of the Contract and include associated costs in the bid proposal. The EEO requirements, labor provisions, and wage rates are included in the specifications.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 USC §§ 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders or offerors that it will affirmatively ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award.

The United States Secretary of Transportation has granted the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands an exemption from the requirements of the Department of Transportation's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) regulation, which later became the Department of Transportation's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program, as it relates to FAA grant programs. The Secretary of Transportation has not determined that a portion of those requirements should be reinstated.

By submitting a bid/proposal under this solicitation, the bidder or offeror certifies that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred or suspended by any Federal department or agency from participation in this transaction.

In addition to the above, all bidders shall comply with all other Federal requirements under this procurement, including but not limited to Buy American Preference, Foreign Trade Restriction, Davis Bacon, Veteran's Preference, Affirmative Action and Government wide Debarment and Suspension and Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-free Workplace. Further details on all Federal requirements are provided in the specifications.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY:

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Date: July 11, 2022

About 400 Rota households get free portable stoves, fuel

An estimated 400 households on Rota participated in the two-day distribution of free portable gas stoves and butane gas canisters by the Division of Energy of the Department of Public Works.

Conducted as part of the 2022 Rota Energy Educational Awareness and Community Outreach Program Campaign Drive-Thru Distribution Event, the distribution was held on the weekend of July 23 and 24 at the Rota Man'Amko Center on Saturday in Sinapalo and Rota Roundhouse on Sunday in Songsong.

The event was open to residential homeowners, provided they present a valid government-issued identification card and a copy of a most recent CUC utility billing with the same name on the ID and CUC account. Each household received one gas stove and 16 butane gas canisters.

Tackling the continuous rise in utility rates, the outreach program was intended to encourage residents to remain resilient through energy conservation and reduce expenses by encouraging the use of the portable gas stoves in residential households.

Division director Thelma B. Inos expressed her gratitude to the Municipality of Rota's staff and acting Rota mayor Jonovan H. Lizama for assisting with the distribution drive and increasing energy awareness in the community.

"Given the increase in [Commonwealth Utilities Corpo.] residential electric rates, we welcome any assistance to the general public from the government, federal or locally funded, especially here on Rota, because it's getting more difficult to live with conditions caused by inflation and the high price of commodities," said Lizama.

Inos added, "For Tinian and Saipan residents, the distribution drive will occur sometime mid- to late August. The Energy Division is waiting for the bulk supply of butane gas to arrive at the port before we can finalize the distribution dates. Again, each household will receive one portable gas stove and 16 butane gas canisters."

The outreach was funded by the U.S. Department of Energy-State Energy Program and conducted in collaboration with the CNMI Office of the Governor, Office of Grants Management & State Clearinghouse.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres was pleased with the turnout for the distribution drive and credits the Division of Energy and Office of Grants Management & State Clearinghouse for their planning and assistance to the Rota community. "I will push for more energy assistance projects to combat the high energy prices and ensure that the CNMI Energy Task Force looks into other alternative energy mediums and accelerates the movement of solar PV grid technology in the Commonwealth," he added. ***(PR)***

The Department of Public Works held its 2022 Rota Energy Educational Awareness event last July 23 and July 24, 2022.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

MAIN OFFICE: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND FLOOR ARRIVAL BLDG.
PO BOX 501055•SAIPAN•MP•96950
PHONE: (1-670) 237-6500/1 | FAX: (1-670) 234-5962
E-MAIL ADDRESS: CPA.ADMIN@PTICOM.COM | WEBSITE: WWW.CNMIPORTS.COM

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

MULTI YEAR FINANCIAL AND COMPLIANCE AUDIT FOR FY 2022, FY 2023, AND FY 2024 PROJECT NO. CPA-RFP-007-22

Notice is hereby given that the Commonwealth Ports Authority (the "CPA") is accepting sealed proposals, subject to the terms and conditions of this Request for Proposals (the "RFP") and other contract provisions, for awarding a contract to provide multi-year financial and compliance audit for FY 2022, FY 2023, and FY 2024. The Executive Director hereby determines that the use of an Invitation for Bid is neither practical nor advantageous to the CPA because the CPA wishes to acquire services and or products that cannot be evaluate by cost alone (NMIAC 40-50-225 (a)). The Scope of Work and other considerations will be available for pick up beginning ***July 01, 2022***, upon a non-refundable payment of $100.00 in cash, cashier's check, certified check, or credit card to the CPA Accounting Office, 2nd Floor, Departure Terminal Building, Saipan International Airport.

Proposals will be received at the Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Ports Authority, 2nd Floor-Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport no later than ***4:00 P.M. LOCAL TIME, August 01, 2022***. Proposals received after the date/time indicated above will not be opened and will be returned to the Proposer.

CPA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted for: (a) any of the reasons set forth in this Request for Proposals; or (b) any of the reasons set forth in the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations regarding bid rejection or cancellation; or (c) sufficient justification exists that awarding the project contract would not be in the best interest of CPA. CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said proposals if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest. All proposals shall become property of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Date _____

DIVISION OF COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

P. O. Box 501304, Saipan MP 96950 • Gualo Rai Center, Saipan
TEL. NO. 664-8300 FAX NO. 664-8315 • www.dcrm.gov.mp

NOTICE OF APPLICATION

As of July 29, 2022

THE FOLLOWING IS A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF COASTAL PERMIT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE DCRM OFFICE:

APPLICANT	DATE APPLICATION RECEIVED	APPLICATION PROJECT DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	TYPE	STATUS
1. Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA)	05/17/2022 SMS-03-X-21-A1	Airport Rescue & Fire Fighting Facility (ARFF) Rapid Refill Project Saipan	Dandan, Saipan	Major Siting	Approved 07/19/2022
2. Triple J Saipan, Inc.	05/19/2022 TMS-2022-035	Triple J Barracks & Commercial Building	Marpo Valley, Tinian	Major Siting	Approved* 07/19/2022
3. Mariana Growth LLC	05/26/2022 TMS-2022-038	Tinian Quarry	Marpo Valley, Tinian	Major Siting	Approved* 07/19/2022
4. Shining Star, Inc. Shining Star Trading	06/21/2022 SMS-2022-043	Shining Star Hotel Improvement Project	Chalan Kanoa, Saipan	Major Siting	Public Hearing* 08/02/2022
5. Thank You Saipan Corporation	06/23/2022 SLR-2018-X-072-R5	Helmet Diving, Scuba Diving & Snorkeling	All Designated Dive Sites, Saipan	Lagoon & Reef	Approved 07/26/2022
6. JB International Holding Limited dba Uncle J Dive	06/27/2022 SLR-2020-X-013-R4	Scuba Diving Tour Operation/Instruction	All Designated Dive Sites Saipan	Lagoon & Reef	Approved 07/26/2022
7. Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA)	06/27/2022 RPIm-2022-04	West Harbor Commercial	West Harbor, Rota	Ports & Industrial	Approved* 07/19/2022
8. Department of Public Works (DPW)	06/28/2022 SMS-00-X-129-A1	As Gonno Solid Waste Transfer Station	As Gonno, Saipan	Major Siting	Public Hearing 08/02/2022
9. Akhil Chandra Mollick dba Ichiban Marine Sports	06/29/2022 SLR-2018-X-079-R5	Banana Boat, Wakeboarding, Kayaking & Snorkeling	Saipan & Managaha Lagoon Saipan	Lagoon & Reef	Approved 07/26/2022
10. Ocean Sports Corporation dba Aqua Dive	06/29/2022 SLR-2018-X-116-R5	Scuba Diving Instruction	All Designated Dive Sites Saipan	Lagoon & Reef	Approved 07/25/2022
11. Ringo Reyes, dba SUP Tinian	07/07/2022 TLRm-2022-007	Paddleboard Rental	All Designated Zones, Tinian	Lagoon & Reef	Approved* 07/28/2022
12. Department of Public Safety (DPS)	07/12/2022 SPI-2022-047	Existing DPS Safety Building	Smiling Cove Marina, Puerto Rico, Saipan	Ports & Industrial	Approved* 07/22/2022
13.Kyung Yi Lee	07/13/2022 SS-2022-048	East Bay Land Clearing	Laolao/East Bay, Saipan	Shoreline	Approved* 07/25/2022
14. Ester S. Chong	07/13/2022 SS-2022-048	Renovation of Existing Single Family Dwelling & Construction of Concrete Garage	Oleai, Saipan	Shoreline	Approved* 07/27/2022
15. Niizeki International Saipan Co., Ltd	07/25/2022 SS-2022-050	Land Clearing	Susupe, Saipan	Shoreline	Approved* 07/27/2022

NMIAC §15-10-210 of the CRM Rules and Regulations requires all permit applications to be published in a newspaper for general circulation within the CNMI within 15 days of receipt of application. The list reflects recently received permit applications and those with a recent change in status. New applications are marked with an asterisk (*).

The Public is invited to submit written comments regarding any of the above projects for which a permit decision has not been issued. All permit comments should identify the project by application number. Your comments should be mailed or hand-delivered to the DCRM Office. All persons who desire a public hearing regarding any project may do so by submitting a written request for a public hearing to the DCRM Office within fourteen (14) days for minor permits (APCs) and proposed amended major sitings. Public Hearings are required for all new major siting projects. All public hearing notices are published in a local newspaper of general circulation. Residents of Rota and Tinian may submit comments and hearing requests to their local DCRM Coordinator. Persons wishing to retain the right to appeal a DCRM Permit decision must file a notice of appeal with the DCRM office within thirty (30) days of the issuance of the DCRM permit decision as provided in Part 200 § 15-10-235 of the DCRM Regulations.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXII, Issue No. 150

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Freshman members of Congress should take a class about the Constitution

The beauty of our democratic system of government is that anyone can get elected. But that feature is also a bug. We suspect we aren't alone among Americans who watch some of the antics on Capitol Hill and think, "How on Earth did that person get elected?" Sometimes it seems that politicians know little more than how to win votes.

To take one recent example: In his first interview after being elected to the U.S. Senate in 2020, Republican Tommy Tuberville, the former Auburn University football coach, misidentified the three branches of our government, claimed that World War II was fought against European socialists, and promised to use his Senate resources to campaign for fellow Republicans, which is illegal.

Tuberville isn't the only one. Examples abound from both parties.

Last fall, Rep. John Yarmuth, D-Ky., suggested that the government "absolutely cannot go bankrupt because we have the power to create as much money as we need to spend."

Nor are politicians outliers. According to the latest installment of the annual Constitution Day Civics Survey by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania, 44% of Americans would join Tuberville in misidentifying the branches of government.

Every elected representative doesn't have to be John Locke, but it would be nice if Americans could have a bit more confidence in Beltway brainpower. U.S. Rep. Liz Cheney, R-Wyo., has an idea that could help, and we think she should pursue it.

In an interview with David Kramer of the George W. Bush Institute last month, Cheney said Congress should institute a "Constitution Boot Camp" for freshman members of Congress. Cheney said freshman onboarding includes a lot of nuts-and-bolts training like "Appropriations Boot Camp" to help lawmakers navigate Washington. But it doesn't include any political philosophy or history.

An official with the minority Committee on House Administration, which handles freshman orientation, told us various seminars are offered to new lawmakers, but only three are required: workplace rights, ethics and cybersecurity.

We remember a day when it was fashionable among elected leaders to carry pocket-size copies of the Constitution, like talismans of patriotism. We don't think Cheney's idea should be about such preening, but a serious crash course in the unique beauty of the American system of government and the genius of its framers.

Cheney has a few important things on her to-do list right now, including a congressional investigation into a former president accused of betraying that very Constitution. When she gets done protecting our founding documents on the Jan. 6 House panel, we encourage her to implement the Congressional Constitution Boot Camp.

© 2022 *The Dallas Morning News*

MIKE SMITH LASVEGASSUN2022
DIST. BY KING FEATURES SYNDICATE/NAS
BECAUSE OF GLOBAL WARMING, WE'VE BECOME A GROWTH INDUSTRY.
JOBS FAIR
BECOME A FIREFIGHTER

Marianas Southern Airways offers many opportunities for CNMI residents

By RALPH DLG TORRES
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Ralph DLG. Torres is the 9th governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the co-chairman of the Governor's Council of Economic Advisers.

The Marianas Southern Airways, the CNMI's newest airline, will fly between Saipan, Tinian, Rota, and Guam in less than a month. This milestone is exactly what my administration has been working on for several years to achieve more reliable interisland transportation, support the local economies on Rota, Tinian, and Saipan, and improve the overall quality of life for our people.

Given Marianas Southern Airway's experience in Hawaii and other countries, they understand the CNMI's unique need for efficient, affordable, and reliable interisland service. I hope that this will encourage more airlines to consider the CNMI as a potentially viable investment. The more airlines there are, the better for our economy, job possibilities, and transportation infrastructure.

I can only imagine how helpful additional flights would be for our citizens who need to commute between Rota, Tinian, and Saipan. We've had residents who couldn't travel around the holidays to be reunited with family. Now we're hoping to avoid this issue.

In mid-August, Marianas Southern Airways will launch with more than 90 weekly flights between Saipan, Tinian, Rota, and Guam. This is fantastic for our community as it will provide a reliable daily service for Rota, Tinian, and Saipan, and eliminate an overnight stay in Guam. This reduces stress and costs for everyone who travels to the Marianas, most especially for our residents. On top of that, Marianas Southern Airways will offer introductory promotional fares for as low as $39 one-way to Tinian, $69 one-way to Rota, and $99 one-way to Guam. Residents can now travel for flights beginning on Aug. 12 at iflymarianas.com.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS

Multi-island transportation will stimulate the economy

Allowing Marianas Southern Airways to operate aligns with the Governor's Council of Economic Advisers' mission of improving the quality of life for our residents. The increased service enhances seat and cargo capacity between the islands, enhancing the possibility of transporting more visitors and goods. It will allow more tourist-related and local businesses to thrive.

Our parks, tourist attractions, and local activities have all played an important role in enticing visitors to stay longer. Looking back at the Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022 and the Taste of the Marianas festival, we saw a good mix of residents and visitors in attendance. We did this with our current interisland services, and I can only imagine how the new airline will positively support future events throughout the Marianas. It will provide more opportunities for visitors to visit Rota and Tinian to learn about the local cultures and revive tourism to where it was a decade ago.

Marianas Southern Airways could not have arrived at a better time, now that the Japanese market is expanding into the CNMI. The Marianas' long-standing historical and cultural ties with Japan, as well as existing Japanese investments in the Marianas' tourism offerings, have persuaded Japanese visitors to keep returning. The establishment of a tourism bubble with Japan, followed by transformations in the Marianas, paves the way for a new generation of Japanese travelers to visit the CNMI to experience what older generations of Japanese visitors have seen.

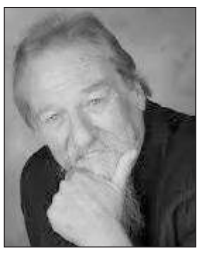
Our partnership with Marianas Southern Airways is a monumental achievement for the Marianas and marks the beginning of a brighter future for travel and tourism in the region. We need to support their efforts, along with every airline that provides service to the Marianas, if we want to continue to grow our economy, create jobs for our residents, and welcome more visitors.

I want to extend my appreciation to MP Enterprises president Keith Stewart and his team for their tremendous efforts to bring a new airline to the Marianas. I greatly appreciate Stan Little, chairman and CEO of Marianas Southern Airways, for taking a chance and seeing what the Marianas has to offer. To everyone who has played a role in bringing this incredible opportunity home, *un dangkulu na si yu'us ma'åse yan ghilisow*! Please join me in welcoming Marianas Southern Airways to their new home, the Marianas. Together, We Can!

For more information about GCEA's programs, visit cnmieconomy.com, engage with the council on Facebook and Instagram (@cnmigov.economy), or contact them at gceacnmi@gmail.com.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Camp Susupe vs. Camp Chalan Kanoa



By DON A. FARRELL
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Don Allen Farrell is an educator, local historian, and author based on the island of Tinian in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. He is known for his research and publications on the history of the Marianas Islands with an emphasis on World War II.

I have received emails asking me to clarify the difference between Camp Susupe and Camp Chalan Kanoa.

When the U.S. Fifth Fleet left Majuro Lagoon for the campaign to capture the Mariana Islands, Saipan and Guam were scheduled for invasion on June 15 and June 18, respectively. This was only one week after the long-delayed invasion of Europe on June 6. Thus, shipping for civilian relief became secondary to shipping for the combat troops and their necessary supplies.

Saipan would be the first large Pacific island to be invaded that had a significant civilian population. On D-Day Saipan, the 2nd Marine Division landed north of Sugar Dock, and the 4th Marine Division to the south of it in one of the bloodiest battles of the Pacific War. For their own safety, those civilians who surrendered on the first day were guided to the landing beaches that had been cleared by the Marines. All civilians, regardless of race, were held there with no shelter of any nature. A handful of Marines and Seabees that could be released from combat did the best they could to provide water and food to the refugees.

Five temporary, barbed-wire stockades were quickly erected on the landing beaches where security could be maintained and relief provided. The 4th Marine Division erected three in their landing area in Chalan Kanoa, while the 2nd Division erected two in Susupe. The 2nd Division also began work on a camp near Lake Susupe. By June 18 the number of refugees had reached 8,130.

On June 19, a military government was officially established on Saipan. As civilians entered the beachside camps, they were interviewed by translators to determine their nationality. Japanese military personnel were placed in a POW camp. Chamorros and Carolinians were considered "liberated" peoples, and the Koreans were identified as citizens of a country that would regain its sovereignty after the war. The Japanese civilians, on the other hand, were treated as citizens of an enemy nation and guarded to prevent acts of sabotage. Segregation of ethnic groups, Japanese, Korean, and Saipanese, was maintained in the camps.

On June 20, the Marine Corps Civil Affairs team was ordered to transfer Japanese civilians from the temporary beach stockades to Camp Susupe.

On Nov. 15, 1944, the Chamorros and Carolinians were moved out of Camp Susupe and into a new camp in Chalan Kanoa, the town formerly occupied by Japanese sugar mill employees. The Chamorros and Carolinians were allowed out of the village during daylight hours to work with the military or to farm pieces of land allotted to them for growing vegetables. They also elected their own camp leadership, managed camp operations, and established private businesses along the beach road through Chalan Kanoa.

The Japanese government in Tokyo offered to surrender shortly after the U.S. dropped atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki on Aug. 6 and 9, respectively. The surrender documents were signed on Sept. 2.

The repatriation of Saipan's Japanese, including Okinawans, and Koreans began on Dec. 21, 1945. By late March, Camp Susupe was emptied, decommissioned, and destroyed.

The simultaneous mass exodus of military personnel in the winter of 1945-'46 nearly depopulated the island. When Camp Chalan Kanoa was decommissioned on July 4, 1946, there were about 4,000 Chamorros and Carolinians on Saipan, along with a relative handful of military administrators. Many of the Chamorros and Carolinians living in Camp Chalan Kanoa chose to remain in the village. Some descendants of those families still live in these prewar houses.

The use of the term "liberated" in relation to the closure of Camp Chalan Kanoa is debatable. The Chamorros and Carolinians who lived out the war in Camp Chalan Kanoa had not been enslaved by the Americans, as had been the Chamorros in Guam by the Japanese from Dec. 10, 1941, until their liberation on July 21, 1944.

However, after 76 years of conducting the annual Liberation Day Parade on Saipan, it has become an integral part of the island's culture. It provides an interesting subject for our young authors. Believe or not, there is much about the war in the Marianas that has not been adequately studied and published.

Moreover, the Liberation Day Parade is fundamentally valuable to the community, in that it provides a mechanism for people to remember the effect that "Japan's War" had on all the Pacific people and to pray that our islands are never again used as a tool of war.

Congratulations are due to Mayor David Apatang and his staff for resurrecting the parade. I felt honored, humbled, to be one of the grand marshals. With more time and funds, next years' parade will no doubt be even bigger and better.

Herd immunity against COVID-19 is unlikely. But we aren't powerless

By CORY FRANKLIN AND ROBERT WEINSTEIN
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

"A man has got to know his limitations." That is one of the memorable phrases uttered by "Dirty Harry" Callahan, the fictional police inspector played by Clint Eastwood. Today, the world is learning its limitations in the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and the most important lesson is that a key strategy we banked on to defeat the virus—herd immunity—appears unobtainable.

Herd immunity is reached when enough people in a community acquire immunity to a disease, either through infection or vaccination or both, that it makes sustained transmission impossible and protects even those who are not immune. The strategy of mass vaccination campaigns to achieve herd immunity has worked well for childhood diseases such as diphtheria, which has essentially disappeared, and for other once-common diseases such as smallpox and polio. (The first U.S. case of polio in a decade was recently reported, thought to be brought in from outside the country.)

The percentage of people who must be immune to stop the spread of a disease depends primarily on how contagious the disease is. The commonly cited example is measles, which is extremely contagious and requires immunity in 90% to 95% of the population to halt transmission. In the past few years, measles outbreaks have occurred in the U.S. despite greater than 80% of the local population being vaccinated.

Which brings us to COVID-19. Early on, public health researchers and the World Health Organization estimated that a range of 60% to 70% population immunity would be necessary to control the disease. As the COVID-19 vaccines became available, more contagious variants also emerged. Public health experts were forced to move up the herd immunity estimate to 75% to 80%. But events on the ground have shattered that notion.

What went wrong with the herd immunity theory? In essence, two things. First, vaccine protection is incomplete and does not last long enough. Second, the virus is constantly mutating to circumvent vaccine protection.

The theory of herd immunity, like all scientific theories, depends on several assumptions, and these assumptions proved not to be true in real life. The first fallacy was that people who have acquired immunity would not acquire or pass on the disease; they must remain resistant. One year ago, after a July 4 gathering in Provincetown, Massachusetts, where nearly everyone was vaccinated, about 1,000 people came down with COVID-19. That disproved the assumption that vaccinated individuals could not acquire or transmit COVID-19. We have since learned that vaccine-induced immunity wanes over time, thus prompting the need for booster shots, which themselves wane in effectiveness over time.

Second, herd immunity theory depends on immunity to a relatively stable disease. Measles does not change much from year to year, and the measles vaccine does not have to be reconfigured annually. In the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was believed the virus would take a long time to mutate. But immune-evading variants appeared more quickly than expected in the U.S. and all over the world. Several countries with vaccination rates greater than 90%, such as Portugal, have experienced significant waves of infection this year, largely as a result of new variants.

Despite the failure to prevent all infections, vaccination has dramatically lessened the severity of disease and the number of COVID-19 deaths in most countries—no small achievement. This may represent a kind of "partial herd immunity," but the possibility of new variants and the limitations of the current vaccines represent a continuing worldwide threat.

As Dirty Harry said, we have our limitations—but we are not powerless. Work proceeds on a universal coronavirus vaccine and a nasal vaccine, both of which might be better suited to stopping COVID-19. We should increase our wastewater testing for COVID-19, which may provide a badly needed early-warning system for impending infection surges and new variants. Information technology can better integrate home testing with public reporting to prevent undercounts of cases, and this can also be used to facilitate quick drug treatment with Paxlovid for those who test positive.

A full-scale national evaluation of adequate indoor ventilation in our buildings, especially our schools, is overdue. When case counts are high, masking and social distancing in certain settings are a responsible way to protect the most vulnerable. Finally, because being overweight is such a strong risk factor for severe COVID-19, a national campaign to reduce obesity is in order. It worked for smoking.

In the near term, COVID-19 is not going away. We cannot say now whether it will be an ongoing significant health threat or a minor inconvenience. Realizing how little we control events, we must hope—with humility—that we are lucky and it turns out to be the latter. But preparation is essential because, as baseball executive Branch Rickey observed, luck is the residue of design. Or as Dirty Harry was fond of asking with menace, "Do you feel lucky?"

Dr. Cory Franklin is a retired intensive care physician. Dr. Robert Weinstein is an infectious disease specialist at Rush University Medical Center.

Torres' statement on the Philippines' recent earthquake

Governor Ralph DLG. Torres on Thursday issued the following statement on the Philippines' recent 7.0 magnitude earthquake:

On behalf of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, I extend my deepest and heartfelt condolences to the family, friends, and loved ones of those who have passed from this devastating earthquake.

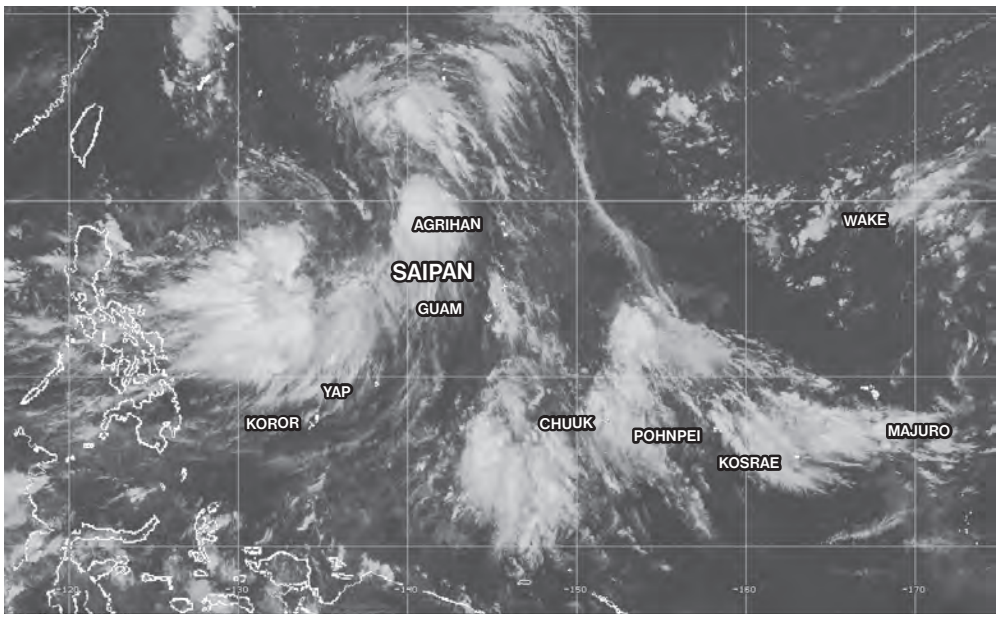
I also send my thoughts and prayers for the recovery of all those who have been injured and impacted by this disaster, as well as to our CNMI community who have family and friends in the Philippines facing the earthquake's aftermath.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Scattered showers and thunderstorms. Partly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny	A chance of showers. Partly sunny
87° 77°	88° 78°	88° 78°	88° 78°	87° 76°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 11:25 AM, THURSDAY, JULY 28, 2022

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite shows an area of scattered showers east of the Marianas, moving toward the islands. The first of these is near Tinian and Saipan now, overall the Marianas are currently still partly cloudy with isolated showers.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

■ Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.

■ Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.

■ Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.

■ Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.

■ Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.

■ Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html

■ Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

■ Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.

■ Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

■ Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:

• Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.

• Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

• Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

• Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769.
E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Cloudy	84° / 78°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	84° / 76°
Yap	Thunderstorms	84° / 78°
Chuuk	Scattered Thunderstorms	85° / 80°
Pohnpei	Showers	83° / 77°
Kosrae	Scattered Thunderstorms	84° / 79°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	84° / 80°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:58 AM	6:48 PM
Saturday	5:58 AM	6:47 PM
Sunday	5:59 AM	6:47 PM
Monday	5:59 AM	6:47 PM
Tuesday	5:59 AM	6:46 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	6:06 AM	7:22 PM	-
Saturday	6:58 AM	8:03 PM	-
Sunday	7:48 AM	8:42 PM	-
Monday	8:38 AM	8:42 PM	-
Tuesday	9:27 AM	9:54 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy 59° / 49°
Beijing	Sunny 90° / 73°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy 94° / 85°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy 85° / 74°
London	Partly Cloudy 80° / 59°
Los Angeles	Sunny 87° / 61°
Manila	Thunderstorms 88° / 79°
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny 55° / 36°
Miami	Mostly Sunny 88° / 81°
New York	Mostly Cloudy 90° / 76°
Osaka	Cloudy 85° / 74°
Paris	Partly Cloudy 85° / 60°
Busan	Sunny 87° / 79°
Rome	Sunny 93° / 72°
Salem	Partly Cloudy 91° / 73°
San Francisco	Cloudy 65° / 57°
Seoul	Thunderstorms 95° / 77°
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny 91° / 79°
Washington, DC	Thunderstorms 88° / 73°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
2:21 AM	Low Tide	1.38
7:01 AM	High Tide	1.93
2:27 PM	Low Tide	-0.03
9:32 PM	High Tide	1.93

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JULY 18, 2022

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily
UA156	6:30PM	7:15PM	6

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	6:00AM	8:00AM	Daily
UA193	7:05PM	10:55PM	5 via Palau
UA183	7:10PM	9:10PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW9308	3:30PM	7:20PM	Daily
7C3405	3:30PM	7:25PM	3, 4, 6
RS112	3:45PM	7:30PM	3, 6 up to July 2 only
7C3405	3:50PM	7:45PM	7
OZ624	4:00PM	7:40PM	3, 6

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	2:00PM	5:20PM	3, 7
BX621	3:10PM	6:30PM	3, 7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	Daily
UA112	4:40PM	5:30PM	6

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

PR110	10:00PM	4:00AM+1	Daily
UA184	10:25PM	4:25AM+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:25PM	6:15AM+1	5 via Palau
UA184	11:50PM	5:40AM+1	5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	1,2,3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/174	11:50PM	8:45AM+1	5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	8:30AM	2:10PM	3, 4, 6, 7
RS111	8:45AM	2:05PM	3, 6 up to July 2 only
TW9307	9:00AM	2:30PM	4, 6, 7
OZ623	9:00AM	2:30PM	3, 6
TW9307	9:15AM	2:30PM	1, 2, 3, 5

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	8:00AM	1:00PM	3, 7
BX621	8:00AM	1:10PM	3, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

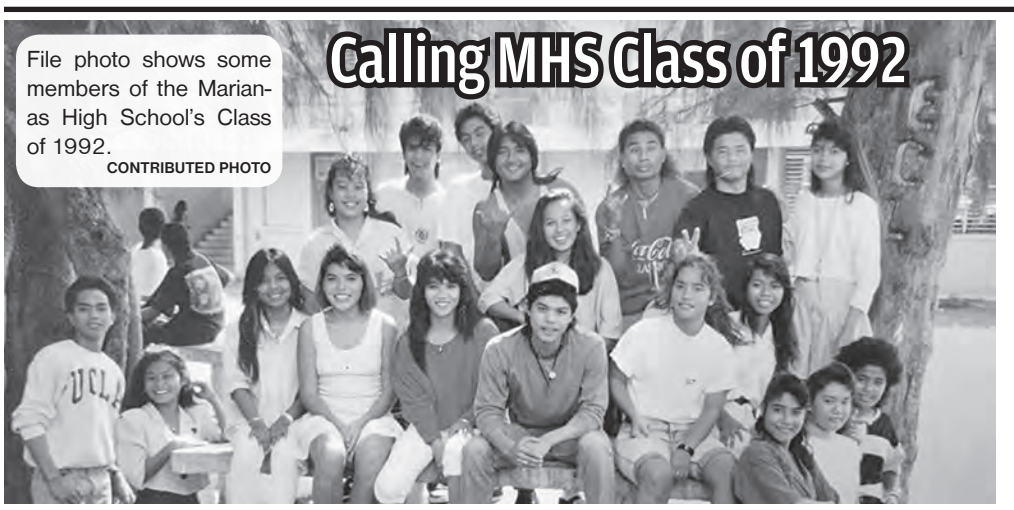
SCC August meeting to feature 500 Sails and PSS Co-Op Program

The monthly general membership meeting of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce will be on Wednesday, Aug. 3, 2022, from 11:30am to 1pm at the Queens Hall of the Kensington Hotel Saipan.

Spotlight presentation will be presented by the 500 Sails' executive director Pete Perez and Cultural Maritime Training Center director Marjorie Daria. They will introduce the CMTC.

Brandon S. Nicholas, the program coordinator of the Public School System's Cooperative Education Program "*Building Tomorrow's Workforce,*" will hold talk more about the program and how it benefits the CNMI community.

Lunch will be served at 11:30am and the meeting will begin promptly at noon. The luncheon fee is $25/Chamber member and $35/non-member. The SCC is accepting reservations of six or more. To reserve or for more information, contact the SCC office at (670) 234-7150 or email coordinator@saipanchamber.com. ***(PR)***



File photo shows some members of the Marianas High School's Class of 1992.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

To celebrae the accomplishments of one of Marianas High School's most vibrant alumni, the Class of 1992 is hosting its 30th Class Reunion at the Pacific Islands Club Charley's Cabaret Saturday evening.

"We have planned an evening of fun, camaraderie and are inviting all our classmates to please come and join us for this very special and momentous occasion," said '92 Reunion committee member Carla Sablan.

The class will take time to honor their military service members and recognize the community contributions the 1992 class members have made over the 30 years here in the Commonwealth and all over the world.

"We are encouraging all our classmates to share photos, videos and messages on our Facebook page, and please email to carladael.castro@gmail.com, we would love to hear from you all," said Sablan.

Tickets are on sale at the door for $50 per person, which includes dinner, drinks and raffle prizes. Doors open at 5pm and the lantern ceremony will begin promptly at 5:30pm. All classmates, families and friends are invited to attend the festive reunion. ***(PR)***

MANGO
Marianas Alliance of Non-Governmental Organizations

Job Vacancy Announcement

PROJECT DIRECTOR

Interested applicants submit resume and cover letter to admin@mangocnmi.org

PROPERTY FOR SALE
LOT NO. 345 R 236
NOTICE OF AUCTION & SALE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the undersigned counsel, Attorney Robert T. Torres, the auctioneer (or his designee), for and on behalf of the Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund, will sell at auction, to the highest bidder, on **August 22, 2022, at 10 a.m.**, at Rota Court House Lobby, the premises, and real estate, lying and being on Sinapalo I, Municipality of Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, described further as follows:

Lot No. 345 R 236, containing an area of 909 square meters, as more particularly described on the DLS Check No. 345 R 05, the original of which was recorded May 14, 1984, as Document No. 84-0751 at the Commonwealth Recorder's Office, Saipan.

Terms and Conditions of Sale.

1. **Rights and Duties of Auctioneer.** Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, the auctioneer or his designee shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction sale:
   a) withdraw the property listed for sale in the public announcement before the sale or before a bid for such property is accepted;
   b) to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is sold, without incurring any liability whatsoever there; and
   c) to reject any and all bids.

2. **Minimum Bid.** Minimum bid for the sale of **Lot No. 345 R 236** is **Fifty-Six Thousand Three Hundred Twenty-Seven Dollars and 00/100 (US $56,327.00)**. All bids shall be in writing and constitute a formal offer from each bidder. Bids may be submitted in advance in writing for the foregoing property. The minimum bid shall be considered the opening bid for the property. Bids may be submitted in person (at the auction), via e-mail, or in writing by delivery to Robert T. Torres, Attorney at Law, Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Box 500730, Saipan, MP 96950, Fax: 670-234-5749; Email: robert.torres@rttlawgroup.com **by 4:00 p.m., Chamorro Standard Time on August 19, 2022**. Any person who submits his/her bid shall provide a copy of his/her valid Identification Card (valid CNMI Driver's License or Passport). A written bid shall include the bidder's signature, with his/her telephone number, mailing address, and any other contact information. The winning bidder shall be the person to whom the property is confirmed if the bid is accepted. The NMI Retirement Fund assumes no liability for any errors or omissions as to a bidder's name or identification if that information is not correctly indicated on the bid form. **Please contact the Law Office of Robert T. Torres for a bid form.**

3. **Deposit and Payment.** A non-refundable guarantee deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale by the winning bidder, no later than **4:00 p.m., Chamorro Standard Time** on that date, by payment to the Law Office of Robert T. Torres. The remaining balance shall be due within ten (10) calendar days from the auction sale. If the tenth calendar day falls on a weekend then the balance shall be due that Monday after the tenth calendar day. **All payments shall be made by cash, money order, or cashier's check**. Failure to make payment of the remaining balance within ten (10) days will result in forfeiture by the buyer of a 10% deposit, and any and all of the bidder's rights, title, and interest in the money shall revert to the Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund.

4. **Change of Terms.** Auctioneer and the Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund reserve the right to change any of the terms conducted and enforcement of sale by the announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on any buyer by the constructive notice.

5. **Quitclaim Deed to Winning Bidder:** All bidders are notified that the NMI Retirement Fund, the Judgment – Creditor, shall issue a Quitclaim Deed to the Winning Bidder.

6. **Inspection and No Warranty.** Bidders are informed and cautioned to inspect the title and property including performing any title research, property inspection, boundary inspection, easement research, and encroachment research on the subject property. Contact the Law Office of Robert T. Torres for scheduled viewing and inspection times. The interests of the property are being sold **"AS IS"** and without any warranties including but not limited to habitability or fitness for purpose. Failure to inspect the real property will not constitute a ground for any claim, adjustment, or rescission by any buyer. A copy of the appraisal report and other documents pertaining to the property to be sold at auction are available upon request for review in advance of the auction date.

DATED this 26th day of July 2022.

/s/_____
Robert T. Torres, Auctioneer
for NMI Retirement Fund

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Rehabilitation Council
P.O. BOX 501521, SAIPAN, MP 95950:
TEL: (670) 322-6537/8: FAX: (670) 322-6538: E-MAIL: nmidir@ovrgov.net

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC §9910, the public is advised that the State Rehabilitation Council will hold its FY 2022 Second General Membership Meeting on Friday, August 05, 2022 at the Napu Room-Pacific Islands Club from 5:00pm-7:00pm
Interested individuals are welcome to attend.

AGENDA

I. Call to Order
II. Roll Call
III. Review and Adoption of Agenda of August 05, 2022
IV. Review and Adoption of First General Membership Meeting Minutes of April 29, 2022
V. Reports
   a. SRC Chairperson
   b. Sub-Committee Chairs
   c. OVR Executive Director
VI. Old Business
   a. Disability Employment Legislation
   b. SRC/SILC/OVR Family Fun Day
   c. Membership Vacancies
VII. New Business
   a. 2022 National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM)
VIII. Action Items
   a. Election of Secretary
IX. Consumer Forum
X. Employer Forum
XI. Miscellaneous
XII. Adjournment

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend the meeting but require accommodations such as large print or sign language interpreters are asked to call Samuel Santos at 322-6537(voice) or email at samuel@ovrgov.net for necessary arrangements no later than Tuesday, August 02, 2022 at 4:30 pm.

/s/ **PRESTON O. BASA,**
SRC CHAIRPERSON

Publication of this notice is paid for by federal funds made possible by a grant from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS).

Business

US not yet in recession and 4 other takeaways from the Fed

WASHINGTON (AP) — Jerome Powell delivered a tough message at the start of a news conference Wednesday: Inflation is way too high, and the Federal Reserve is laser-focused on taming it with higher borrowing costs.

Yet despite his resolute words, the Fed chair also said for the first time that the central bank's actions are already having an effect on the economy in ways that could slow the worst inflation the nation has endured in four decades.

With the Fed's benchmark interest rate now at a level that's believed to neither stimulate nor restrain growth, Powell said the pace of rate hikes could slow in the coming months. And he pointed to signs that many businesses are having an easier time filling jobs, a trend that would limit pay increases and potentially slow inflation.

"There were some hints that we're closer to the end than the beginning" of the Fed's efforts to tighten credit, said Michael Feroli, an economist at JPMorgan Chase and a former Fed staffer.

Powell

Powell's suggestion that the Fed could moderate its future rate hikes after it announced a three-quarter-point hike Wednesday — its second in a row of that substantial size — helped touch off a celebratory rally in the stock market, with the S&P 500 jumping 2.6% and the tech-heavy Nasdaq rocketing 4.1%, its biggest gain in more than two years.

Some economists didn't share the market's optimism. They noted that Powell kept the door open to another big rate increase when the Fed next meets in September. The Fed chair also indicated that even if the economy were to fall into a recession, the central bank would keep raising rates if it deemed that necessary to curb still-high inflation.

When asked at his news conference whether a recession would alter the Fed's course of rate hikes, Powell said simply, "We're going to be focused on getting inflation back down."

Here are five takeaways from the Fed's interest-rate setting policy meeting and Powell news conference:

Powell: U.S. not in recession

A slew of recent data has signaled the economy is weakening. Economists are increasingly forecasting a recession for later this year or in 2023. Powell, though, pointed Wednesday to the robust labor market as evidence the economy isn't in recession, at least not yet.

Employers, he noted, added 2.7 million jobs in the first half of the year, the 3.6% U.S. unemployment rate is near a 50-year low and wage growth is strong.

"It doesn't make sense that the economy could be in recession with this kind of thing happening," the Fed chair said.

Jobs over GDP

On Thursday, the government will estimate second-quarter gross domestic product, the broadest measure of the nation's output of goods and services. Some economists think the GDP report will show that the economy contracted for a second straight quarter, which would meet an informal definition of recession.

But even if it does, the definition of recession that is most widely accepted is the one determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research, a group of economists whose Business Cycle Dating Committee defines a recession as "a significant decline in economic activity that is spread across the economy and lasts more than a few months."

Powell also noted that the government's estimate of quarterly GDP is often significantly revised later and that the initial reports on economic growth should be taken with "a grain of salt."

The Fed chair did sound a cautionary note, pointing out that there are signs that momentum in the job market is easing. Job openings have declined modestly, more people are seeking unemployment aid and hiring is lower than it was at the start of the year.

Slower growth, hiring good

But even those signs of a slightly weaker job market are not all bad news, at least from the Fed's perspective.

The Fed wants to cool the economy through its rate hikes, which make home mortgages, auto loans and business borrowing more expensive. As consumers and businesses spend less, the resulting pullback in demand can bring inflation down closer to the Fed's 2% annual target.

"We think it's necessary to have growth slow down, and growth is going to be slowing this year," Powell said.

Fed unleashes another big rate hike in bid to curb inflation

AP

As traders work and watch, a news conference held by Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell is displayed at the New York Stock Exchange in New York, Wednesday, July 27, 2022.

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Federal Reserve on Wednesday raised its benchmark interest rate by a hefty three-quarters of a point for a second straight time in its most aggressive drive in more than three decades to tame high inflation.

The Fed's move will raise its key rate, which affects many consumer and business loans, to a range of 2.25% to 2.5%, its highest level since 2018.

Speaking at a news conference after the Fed's latest policy meeting, Chair Jerome Powell offered mixed signals about the central bank's likely next moves. He stressed that the Fed remains committed to defeating chronically high inflation, while holding out the possibility that it may soon downshift to smaller rate hikes.

And even as worries grow that the Fed's efforts could eventually cause a recession, Powell passed up several opportunities to say the central bank would slow its hikes if a recession occurred while inflation was still high.

Roberto Perli, an economist at Piper Sandler, an investment bank, said the Fed chair emphasized that "even if it caused a recession, bringing down inflation is important."

But Powell's suggestion that rate hikes could slow now that its key rate is roughly at a level that is believed to neither support nor restrict growth helped ignite a powerful rally on Wall Street, with the S&P 500 stock market index surging 2.6%. The prospect of lower interest rates generally fuel stock market gains.

At the same time, Powell was careful during his news conference not to rule out another three-quarter-point hike when the Fed's policymakers next meet in September. He said that rate decision will depend upon what emerges from the many economic reports that will be released between now and then.

"I do not think the U.S. is currently in a recession," Powell said at his news conference in which he suggested that the Fed's rate hikes have already had some success in slowing the economy and possibly easing inflationary pressures.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Pipeline company to pay nearly $1M over California oil spill

HUNTINGTON BEACH, Calif. (AP)—The owner of an underwater oil pipeline that spilled some 25,000 gallons of crude into the ocean off Southern California last year will pay nearly $1 million in cleanup costs. The Orange County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday agreed to accept a proposed claim settlement with Amplify Energy Corp. over the costs of dealing with last October's spill off of Huntington Beach. The ruptured pipeline spilled the oil, equal to about 94,600 liters, about 4 miles (6.4 kilometers) offshore. While less severe than initially feared, the spill shuttered beaches for a week and fisheries for more than a month, oiled birds and threatened wetlands that Orange County communities have been striving to restore.

Facebook parent Meta posts first revenue decline in history

Meta, the parent company of Facebook and Instagram, posted its first revenue decline in history Thursday, dragged down by a drop in ad spending as the economy falters—and as competition from rival TikTok intensifies. The results largely followed a broader decline in the digital advertising market that is dinging Meta rivals such as Google, Twitter—which also posted a revenue decline—and Snap. Google's parent company Alphabet reported its slowest quarterly growth in two years on Tuesday. CEO Mark Zuckerberg said Meta is slowing its pace of investments and plans to "steadily reduce" employee growth after a hiring blitz earlier this year. "This is a period that demands more intensity," he said in a conference call with analysts. "Expect us to get more done with fewer resources." ***(AP)***

Report: Federal debt lower in 2022; still poised to climb

The Congressional Budget Office said Wednesday that the end of pandemic-era spending, fast economic growth and higher tax revenues have caused the federal debt this year to be lower than forecast. But the nonpartisan office also includes a warning in its 30-year outlook about how debt will soon spiral upward to new highs that could ultimately imperil the U.S. economy. The estimates show the complex politics beneath government finances. Debt-related pressures have faded somewhat in the short-term for lawmakers, even as they continue to loom as a troubling risk for future congresses and presidents. Accumulated debt held by the public will be equal to 98% of U.S. gross domestic product this year, four points lower than the 2021 forecast. But this would be a brief respite from rising levels of debt that would surpass the historical high in 2031 and climb by 2052 to 185% of GDP. ***(AP)***

Nation

Hawaii pair accused of conspiracy, taking IDs of dead babies

HONOLULU (AP)—A U.S. defense contractor and his wife who lived for decades under the identities of two dead Texas children have been charged with identity theft and conspiring against the government, according to federal court records unsealed in Honolulu.

Walter Glenn Primrose and Gwynn Darle Morrison, both in their 60s, who allegedly lived for decades under the names Bobby Edward Fort and Julie Lyn Montague, respectively, were arrested Friday in Kapolei on the island of Oahu.

Prosecutors are seeking to have the couple held without bail, which could indicate the case is about more than fraudulently obtaining drivers' licenses, passports and Defense Department credentials.

AP

This combination of undated photos provided by the United States District Court District of Hawaii shows Walter Glenn Primose, left, also known as Bobby Edward Fort, and his wife Gwynn Darle Morrison, also known as Julie Lyn Montague, purportedly in KGB, the former Russian spy agency, uniforms.

Those documents helped Primrose get secret security clearance with the U.S. Coast Guard and as a defense contractor and old photos show the couple wearing uniforms of the KGB, the former Russian spy agency, Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas Muehleck said in court papers. Faded Polaroids of each in uniform were included in the motion to have them held.

A "close associate" said Morrison lived in Romania while it was a Soviet bloc country, Muehleck said.

Morrison's attorney said her client never lived in Romania and that she and Primrose tried the same jacket on as a joke and posed for photos in it. Even if the couple used new identities, attorney Megan Kau told The Associated Press, they have lived law-abiding lives for three decades.

"She wants everyone to know she's not a spy," Kau said. "This has all been blown way out of proportion. It's government overreaching."

Prosecutors said there is a high risk the couple would flee if freed. They also suggested that Primrose, who was an avionics electrical technician in the Coast Guard, was highly skilled to communicate secretly if released.

The couple is also believed to have other aliases, Muehleck said.

A lawyer for Primrose declined comment. A bail hearing was scheduled for Thursday in U.S. District Court.

The secret clearance Primrose had provides access to information that is "enormously valuable to our enemies," said Kevin O'Grady, a Honolulu defense attorney not involved in the case.

The Coast Guard works closely with the Army and Navy, helps with counterintelligence and serves as the country's maritime border patrol, said O'Grady, an Army reservist and lieutenant colonel judge advocate.

"The Coast Guard has a unique perspective on our vulnerabilities," he said, including how to infiltrate the country through water ports. Hawaii, a major military center, "is a prime target for a lot of espionage and such," he said.

For one family whose deceased child's name was stolen, the news Wednesday came as a shock.

John Montague, who lost his daughter Julie in 1968 at 3 weeks of age, was stunned to learn someone had been living under her name for so long.

"I still can't believe it happened," Montague, 91, told AP. "The odds are like one-in-a-trillion that they found her and used her name. People stoop to do anything nowadays. Let kids rest in peace."

Texas wildfire that's destroyed 16 homes is further contained

GLEN ROSE, Texas (AP)—A wildfire that has blackened 10 1/2 square miles (27 square kilometers) of North Texas, destroying 16 homes, reached 40% containment Wednesday, double what it had been the day before, officials said.

The multi-agency firefighting team fighting the Chalk Mountain Fire 50 miles (80 kilometers) southwest of Fort Worth said it had completed a fire line around the fire Wednesday. However, the lines are sufficient only to be impervious to further spreading in 40% of the fire zone, primarily its southern reaches.

In a statement, team officials said work continues to improve the lines around the rest of the zone while also attacking stubborn hot spots within the zone's interior.

No injuries have been reported.

Extreme drought combined with wind gusts and temperatures topping 100 degrees has resulted in destructive wildfires across North Texas. The soil was depleted of moisture at least 8 inches from the surface in the Chalk Mountain area, firefighting team officials said.

This year has been plagued by wildfires fostered by severe to extreme drought throughout the West.

In California, firefighters have been fighting a huge wildfire that spread to a forest near Yosemite National Park, forcing thousands of residents to evacuate mountain communities. The fire is the second to strike the area. Another fire that broke out in the area earlier this month burned to the edge of a grove of giant sequoias.

2 dead, 10 injured in SUV rollover near US-Mexico border

SUNLAND PARK, N.M. (AP)—Two people died and 10 were injured Wednesday when the SUV they were in rolled over in southeastern New Mexico about eight miles from the U.S.-Mexico border, officials said.

A thirteenth person also was in the Chevrolet Tahoe but it was unclear whether that person was injured, said Sunland Park Fire Chief Daniel Medrano. His agency responded to the crash, which occurred around 4:45 a.m. about 13 miles (21 kilometers) northwest of El Paso, Texas.

New Mexico State Police confirmed the two fatalities but did not respond to repeated requests for comment on whether law enforcement officers were pursuing the SUV when the rollover happened. Medrano said two of the people who were hurt suffered critical injuries and that all of the injured were taken to hospitals.

Federal officials in a statement said U.S. Border Patrol agents provided assistance at the crash scene, but declined to specify what type of help or whether agents were involved in a pursuit.

The Mexican Consulate in El Paso said in a statement that nine of the injured people were Mexican and that it is providing assistance to them.

While authorities did not identify the people in the SUV as immigrants, the stretch of border in southeastern New Mexico where the crash happened is among the spots where migrants regularly are smuggled across from Mexico in SUVs.

Heat wave in US forecast to last longer

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)—The scorching heat spell in the Pacific Northwest is now expected to last longer than forecasters had initially predicted, setting parts of the normally temperate region on course to break heat wave duration records.

"We warmed up the forecast for the latter part of this week," said David Bishop, a meteorologist for the National Weather Service in Portland, Oregon. His office is now forecasting up to 101 degrees Fahrenheit (38.3 Celsius) for Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Portland already hit 102 F (38.9 C) on Tuesday, a new record daily high, prompting the National Weather Service to extend the excessive heat warning for the city from Thursday through Saturday evening.

Seattle on Tuesday also reported a new record daily high of 94 F (34.4 C).

The duration of the heat wave puts Oregon's biggest city on course to tie its longest streak of six consecutive days of 95 F (35 C) or higher.

Climate change is fueling longer heat waves in the Pacific Northwest, a region where weeklong heat spells were historically rare, according to climate experts.

Heat-related 911 calls in Portland have tripled in recent days, from an estimated eight calls on Sunday to 28 calls on Tuesday, said Dan Douthit, a spokesperson for the city's Bureau of Emergency Management. Most calls involved a medical response, Douthit added.

In rare contact, US offers Russia deal for Griner, Whelan

WASHINGTON (AP)—The U.S. has offered a deal to Russia aimed at bringing home WNBA star Brittney Griner and another jailed American, Paul Whelan, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Wednesday.

In a sharp reversal of previous policy, Blinken also said he expects to speak with his Kremlin counterpart for the first time since before Russia invaded Ukraine to discuss the deal and other matters.

Blinken's comments marked the first time the U.S. government has publicly revealed any concrete action it has taken to secure the release of Griner, who was arrested on drug-related charges at a Moscow airport in February and testified Wednesday at her trial. He did not offer details on the proposed deal outlined to the Russians, though a person familiar with the matter said the U.S. government has offered to trade convicted Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout for Whelan and Griner.

AP

WNBA star and two-time Olympic gold medalist Brittney Griner is escorted to a courtroom for a hearing, in Khimki just outside Moscow, Russia, Monday, July 25, 2022.

The person insisted on anonymity to discuss an ongoing investigation.

Though it is unclear if the proposal will be enough for Russia to release the Americans, the public acknowledgment of the offer at a time when the U.S. has otherwise shunned Russia reflects the mounting pressure on the administration over Griner and Whelan and its determination to get them home.

It also signals a growing acceptance by the White House of prisoner swaps as resolutions for cases of Americans jailed overseas, particularly after a trade in April that secured the release of Marine veteran Trevor Reed and yielded a much-needed publicity win for the administration.

Asia

AMID TENSIONS WITH US, S. KOREA

Kim threatens to use nukes

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korean leader Kim Jong Un warned he's ready to use his nuclear weapons in potential military conflicts with the United States and South Korea, state media said Thursday, as he unleashed fiery rhetoric against rivals he says are pushing the Korean Peninsula to the brink of war.

Kim's speech to war veterans on the 69th anniversary of the end of the 1950-53 Korean War was apparently meant to boost internal unity in the impoverished country amid pandemic-related economic difficulties. While Kim has increasingly threatened his rivals with nuclear weapons, it's unlikely that he would use them first against the superior militaries of the U.S. and its allies, observers say.

"Our armed forces are completely prepared to respond to any crisis, and our country's nuclear war deterrent is also ready to mobilize its absolute power dutifully, exactly and swiftly in accordance with its mission," Kim said in Wednesday's speech, according to the official Korean Central News Agency.

He accused the United States of "demonizing" North Korea to justify its hostile policies. He said U.S.-South Korea military drills targeting North Korea show the U.S.'s "double standards" and "gangster-like" aspects because it brands North Korea's routine military activities—an apparent reference to its missile tests—as provocations or threats.

Kim also alleged the new South Korean government of President Yoon Suk Yeol is led by "confrontation maniacs" and "gangsters" who have gone further than previous South Korean conservative governments. Since taking office in May, the Yoon government has moved to strengthen Seoul's military alliance with the United States and bolster its capacity to neutralize North Korean nuclear threats including a preemptive strike capability.

"Talking about military action against our nation, which possesses absolute weapons that they fear the most, is preposterous and is very dangerous suicidal action," Kim said. "Such a dangerous attempt will be immediately punished by our powerful strength and the Yoon Suk Yeol government and his military will be annihilated."

Moon Hong-sik, a deputy spokesperson at the South Korean Defense Ministry, reiterated Thursday an earlier position that South Korea has been boosting its military capacity and joint defense posture with the United States to cope with escalating North Korean nuclear threats. South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the military maintains a firm readiness.

Philippines scraps Russian chopper deal

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippine government has scrapped a deal to purchase 16 Russian military transport helicopters due to fears of possible U.S. sanctions, Philippine officials said.

Former Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said Tuesday night he canceled the 12.7-billion-peso ($227 million) deal to acquire the Mi-17 helicopters in a decision last month that was approved by then-President Rodrigo Duterte before their terms in office ended on June 30.

"We could face sanctions," Lorenzana told The Associated Press, describing ways Washington could express its displeasure if the Philippines proceeded with the deal due to America's worsening conflict with Russia.

American security officials were aware of Manila's decision and could offer similar heavy-lift helicopters for Philippine military use, he said.

After serving as defense chief under Duterte, Lorenzana has been appointed by new President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to head a government agency in charge of transforming former military bases into business hubs.

Philippine Ambassador to Washington Jose Manuel Romualdez told The AP that the deal was canceled because Manila could face possible sanctions under a U.S. federal law called the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act if the helicopter deal went through.

A Philippine military official said the helicopter deal would undergo a "termination process" after the decision to cancel it was made since a contract has already been signed. The Russians can appeal but there is little room for the Philippine government to reconsider, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of a lack of authority to publicly discuss the issue.

Under the helicopter purchase agreement, which was signed in November, the first batch of the multi-purpose helicopters would have been scheduled for delivery by Russia's Sovtechnoexport in about two years.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Pakistan uses boats, helicopters to evacuate flood victims

QUETTA, Pakistan (AP)—Rescuers backed by troops used boats and helicopters Wednesday to evacuate hundreds of marooned people from the country's southwest, where floods triggered by monsoon rains have killed 104 people. Since June 14, the downpours have damaged bridges, roads and about 4,000 homes in Baluchistan province, according to the National Disaster Management Authority. It said 337 people have died in rain-related incidents across impoverished Pakistan. Akram Bugti, a rescue official, said hundreds of people were stranded just in Lasbella, a district in Baluchistan province, after floodwater inundated several villages.

Security Council condemns Myanmar executions of 4 activists

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—The U.N. Security Council on Wednesday unanimously condemned Myanmar's executions of four political prisoners and called for an immediate halt to all violence and "full respect for human rights and the rule of law." The statement approved by all 15 council members noted Myanmar had hanged the men after the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and other members of the 10-nation bloc that includes Myanmar appealed for the sentences to be reconsidered. Council members also "reiterated their full support for Myanmar's democratic transition and their strong commitment to the sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity and unity of Myanmar." ASEAN has been leading global efforts to bring peace to Myanmar, which has been rocked by civil unrest and and widespread fighting since the military ousted an elected government in February 2021. But it has stonewalled on ASEAN's peacemaking efforts.

World

US rocket system enables Ukraine to take out a Russia supply bridge

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—Ukrainian troops used American-supplied precision rocket launchers to knock out a strategic bridge used by Russia to supply its forces in southern Ukraine's occupied Kherson region, officials said Wednesday.

Ukraine also claimed to have destroyed an enemy ammunition depot, artillery pieces and other military equipment in the region, killing 51 members of the Russian army. There was no immediate confirmation from the Russian side.

The Antonivskyi Bridge over the Dnieper River was attacked late Tuesday, according to Kirill Stremousov, deputy head of the Moscow-appointed administration for the Kherson region. The bridge was left standing, but holes in its deck prevented vehicles from crossing the 1.4-kilometer (0.9-mile) span, he said.

After previous Ukrainian attacks damaged the bridge last week, it was closed to trucks, but it had remained open for passenger vehicles until the latest strike.

Russian forces in recent days have intensified their shelling of cities and villages in eastern Ukraine while also stepping up airstrikes in the south. At the same time, the Kremlin's troops are facing mounting counterattacks from the Ukrainians in the Kherson region, which was captured by Moscow early in the war.

Ukrainian forces used U.S.-supplied HIMARS multiple rocket launchers to target the bridge, Stremousov said. A Ukrainian military spokesperson, Nataliya Gumenyuk, told Ukrainian TV that "surgical strikes" were carried out on the bridge.

The HIMARS has greater range, much more precision and a faster rate of fire than the Soviet-designed Smerch, Uragan and Tornado rocket launchers used by both Russia and Ukraine. The weapons were among the billions of dollars in Western military aid that has helped Ukraine fight off the Russians since the Feb. 24 invasion.

Followers of cleric enter Iraqi parliament in show of force

Iraqi protesters breach Baghdad's parliament in Baghdad, Iraq, Wednesday, July. 27, 2022. AP

BAGHDAD (AP)—Hundreds of Iraqi protesters breached Baghdad's parliament Wednesday chanting anti-Iran curses in a demonstration against a nominee for prime minister by Iran-backed parties.

The majority of the protesters were followers of influential Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr. The demonstrators, all of them men, were seen walking on tables of the parliament floor, leafing through folders, sitting in the chairs of lawmakers and waving Iraqi flags. The incident raised the stakes in the political struggle for Iraq nearly 10 months after federal elections.

No lawmakers were present. Only security forces were inside the building and they appeared to allow the protesters in with relative ease.

The demonstrators were protesting the recent selection of Mohammed al-Sudani as the official nominee of the Coordination Framework bloc, a coalition led by Iran-backed Shiite parties and their allies.

It was the largest protest since federal elections were held in October, and the second time al-Sadr has used his ability to mobilize masses to send a message to his political rivals this month. Earlier in July, thousands heeded his call for a mass prayer, an event many feared would devolve into destabilizing protests.

Hours after his followers occupied parliament, al-Sadr issued a statement on Twitter telling them their message had been received, and "to return safely to your homes," signaling there would be no further escalation to the sit-in. Shortly after, protesters began making their way out of the parliament building with security forces supervising.

The incident, and al-Sadr's subsequent show of control over his followers, carried an implicit warning to the Framework alliance of a potential escalation to come if the government forms with al-Sudani at the helm.

Al-Sadr's ability to mobilize and control his large grassroots following gives him powerful leverage over his rivals. In a similar fashion, his followers stormed the Green Zone in 2016 and entered the country's parliament building to demand political reform.

Off The Wall

Polish institute classifies cats as alien invasive species

WARSAW, Poland (AP)—A respected Polish scientific institute has classified domestic cats as an "invasive alien species," citing the damage they cause to birds and other wildlife.

Some cat lovers have reacted emotionally to this month's decision and put the key scientist behind it on the defensive.

Wojciech Solarz, a biologist at the state-run Polish Academy of Sciences, wasn't prepared for the disapproving public response when he entered "Felis catus," the scientific name for the common house cat, into a national database run by the academy's Institute of Nature Conservation.

The database already had 1,786 other species listed with no objections, Solarz told The Associated Press on Tuesday. The uproar over invasive alien species No. 1,787, he said, may have resulted from some media reports that created the false impression his institute was calling for feral and other cats to be euthanized.

Solarz described the growing scientific consensus that domestic cats have a harmful impact on biodiversity given the number of birds and mammals they hunt and kill.

The criteria for including the cat among alien invasive species, "are 100% met by the cat," he said.

In a television segment aired by independent broadcaster TVN, the biologist faced off last week against a veterinarian who challenged Solarz's conclusion on the dangers cats pose to wildlife.

Dorota Suminska, the author of a book titled "The Happy Cat," pointed to other causes of shrinking biodiversity, including a polluted environment and urban building facades that can kill birds in flight.

"Ask if man is on the list of non-invasive alien species," Suminska said, arguing that cats were unfairly assigned too much blame.

Solarz pushed back, arguing that cats kill about 140 million birds in Poland each year.

Earlier this month, the Polish Academy institute published a post on its website citing the "controversy" and seeking to clarify its position. The institute stressed that it was "opposed to any cruelty towards animals." It also argued that its classification was in line with European Union guidelines.

As far as categorizing cats as "alien," the institute noted that "Felis catus" was domesticated probably around 10,000 years ago in the cradle of the great civilizations of the ancient Middle East, making the species alien to Europe from a strictly scientific point of view.

The institute also stressed that all it was recommending was for cat owners to limit the time their pets spend outdoors during bird breeding season.

"I have a dog, but I don't have anything against cats," Solarz said.

Big pink diamond discovered in Angola, largest in 300 years

JOHANNESBURG (AP)—A big pink diamond of 170 carats has been discovered in Angola and is claimed to be the largest such gemstone found in 300 years.

Called the "Lulo Rose," the diamond was found at the Lulo alluvial diamond mine, the mine's owner, the Lucapa Diamond Company, announced Wednesday on its website.

"Only one in 10,000 diamonds is colored pink. So you're certainly looking at a very rare article when you find a very large pink diamond," Lucapa CEO Stephen Wetherall told The Associated Press.

The pink gemstone is expected to fetch a high value when auctioned, but Wetherall said he doesn't know what kind of premium will be paid because of its color.

AP

This photo supplied by Lucapa Diamond Company on Wednesday, July 27, 2022, shows the 170 carat pink diamond, right, recovered from Lulo, Angola.

Lulo is an alluvial mine which means the stones are recovered from a river bed. The Lucapa company is searching for the underground deposits, known as kimberlite pipes, which would be the main source of the diamonds, said Wetherall, speaking from the company's headquarters in Australia.

"We're looking for the kimberlite pipes that brought these diamonds to the surface," Wetherall said. "When you find these high-value large diamonds ... it certainly elevates the excitement from our perspective in our hunt for the primary source."

About 400 staff are employed at the Lulo mine which has already produced the two largest diamonds ever found in Angola, including a 404-carat clear diamond, he said.

The pink gemstone is the fifth largest diamond found at the mine where 27 diamonds of 100 carats or more have been found, according to Lucapa.

The pink diamond will be sold by international tender by the Angolan state diamond marketing company, Sodiam. Angola's mines make it one of the world's top 10 producers of diamonds.

Police: California burglar forgot his keys inside crime scene

SAN RAFAEL, Calif. (AP)—A Northern California burglar returned to the scene of the crime this weekend after he forgot his keys inside a doughnut company's corporate office.

The thief stole some petty cash from Johnny Doughnuts' office in the San Francisco Bay Area on Saturday night, police said. In another twist, he also grabbed the keys to a bakery vehicle, but didn't steal the vehicle itself.

San Rafael police are seeking the public's help to identify the burglar, who used an unknown tool to "manipulate" the office's doorknob and get inside around 10 p.m., according to Lt. Dan Fink. The crime was reported to police on Monday.

Surveillance video shows the man moving between the office and a back storage area, where he pried open a filing cabinet, Fink said.

The lieutenant said the thief took a bank bag with an unknown amount of cash.

"Part of the investigating is finding out why this specific business was targeted," he said.

Sheriff: Woman intent on revenge versus ex sets fire to wrong house

SALISBURY, N.C. (AP)—A North Carolina woman apparently seeking revenge on her ex-boyfriend tried to set fire to a house owned by someone else, according to a sheriff's office.

The Rowan County Sheriff's Office said in a report that a homeowner in Gold Hill was awakened Friday by a neighbor who saw a woman trying to set fire to the house. There were bundles of wood and a fire on the front porch and deputies found a jug of oil that they say was used to start the fire.

As the homeowner went to get a garden hose, he saw burning pieces of wood around a propane tank. The garden hose didn't work because the woman had apparently used a sealant to block the flow of water, deputies said.

The homeowner grabbed a rifle and confronted the woman, who was holding one of his dogs on a leash. With law enforcement and emergency personnel approaching, the woman drove off, the sheriff's office reported.

Deputies arrested the woman and charged her with felony first-degree arson, assault with a deadly weapon, and larceny of an animal. Bond was set at $101,500. It couldn't be determined Tuesday if she had an attorney.

Investigators estimate the home sustained approximately $20,000 in damage.

First Death Anniversary

†ALDEBERT CONCEPCION

OCTOBER 22, 1953 - AUGUST 3, 2021

We, the family of the late †Aldebert Concepcion, would like to invite our friends and family to join us in prayers as we commemorate the first death anniversary of our beloved husband, father and grandfather.

Daily mass is being offered at Mount Carmel Cathedral on the following dates and times:

- Tuesday, July 26 through Saturday, July 30 - 6am
- Sunday, July 31 - 9am
- Monday, August 1 through Wednesday, August 3 - 6am

Your presence and prayers are sincerely appreciated.

Si Yu'us Ma'ase

Celina Attao Concepcion, Children & Family

Science & Technology

China launches one of 2 lab modules to join space station

AP
In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, the Long March 5B Y3 carrier rocket, carrying Wentian lab module blasts off from the Wenchang Space Launch Center in Wenchang in southern China's Hainan Province Sunday, July 24, 2022.

BEIJING (AP)—China on Sunday launched one of two laboratory modules to complete its permanent orbiting space station.

The Wentian was launched from tropical Hainan Island with a large crowd of amateur photographers and space enthusiasts watching. Designed for science and biology experiments, the module lifted off on the Long March 5B remote 3 rocket, and spent roughly eight minutes in flight before it entered orbit, according to the official Xinhua News Agency.

A second lab module, called the Mengtian, is due to be launched in October, and both will join the Tiangong space station. Three astronauts are already living in the core module and will oversee the arrival and docking of the lab.

The launch is the third since the Chinese space station entered its construction phase. It was preceded by the Tianzhou-class cargo spacecraft and the Shenzhou-14 crewed spacecraft.

China's space program is run by the ruling Communist Party's military wing, the People's Liberation Army, prompting the U.S. to exclude it from the International Space Station. As a result, China largely had to work on its own in its Tiangong space station program, building and then abandoning two experimental stations before embarking on the latest iteration.

The 23-ton lab module is heavier than any other single-module spacecraft that is currently in space, according to the state-owned Global Times.

China's space program launched its first astronaut into orbit in 2003, making it only the third country to do so on its own after the former Soviet Union and the U.S.

China adds science laboratory to its orbiting space station

BEIJING (AP)—China added a laboratory to its permanent orbiting space station Monday as it moves toward completing the structure in coming months.

The Wentian laboratory was launched from the Wenchang space base on the tropical island province of Hainan on Sunday with a large crowd of amateur photographers and space enthusiasts watching.

After 13 hours of flight, it successfully docked with the Tianhe living area of the Tiangong space station at 3:13 a.m. Monday (1913 GMT), according to the China Manned Space Agency.

Photos distributed by Xinhua News Agency later showed the three astronauts inside the expanded space station.

The 23-ton Wentian laboratory is designed for science and biology experiments and is heavier than any other single-module spacecraft currently in space, according to the state-owned Global Times.

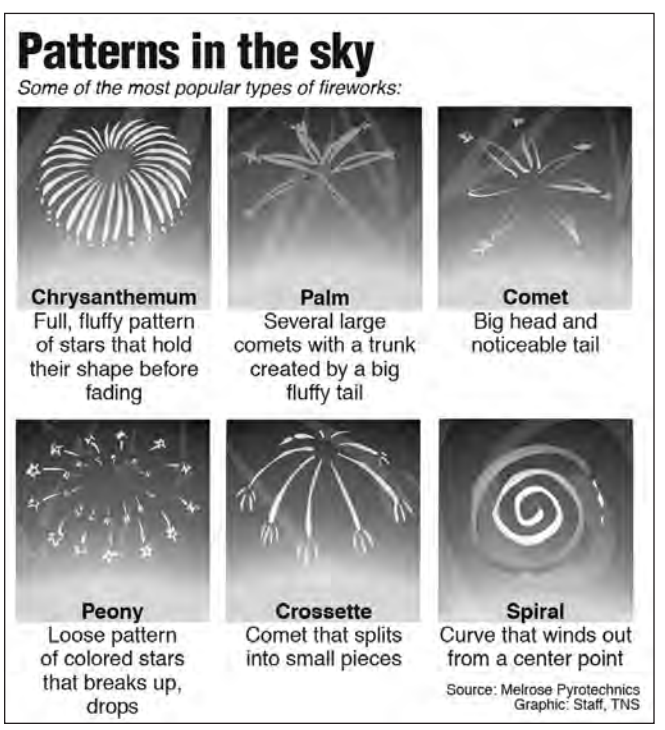
Three astronauts who started their six-month mission aboard the space station last month oversaw the Wentian's arrival and docking.

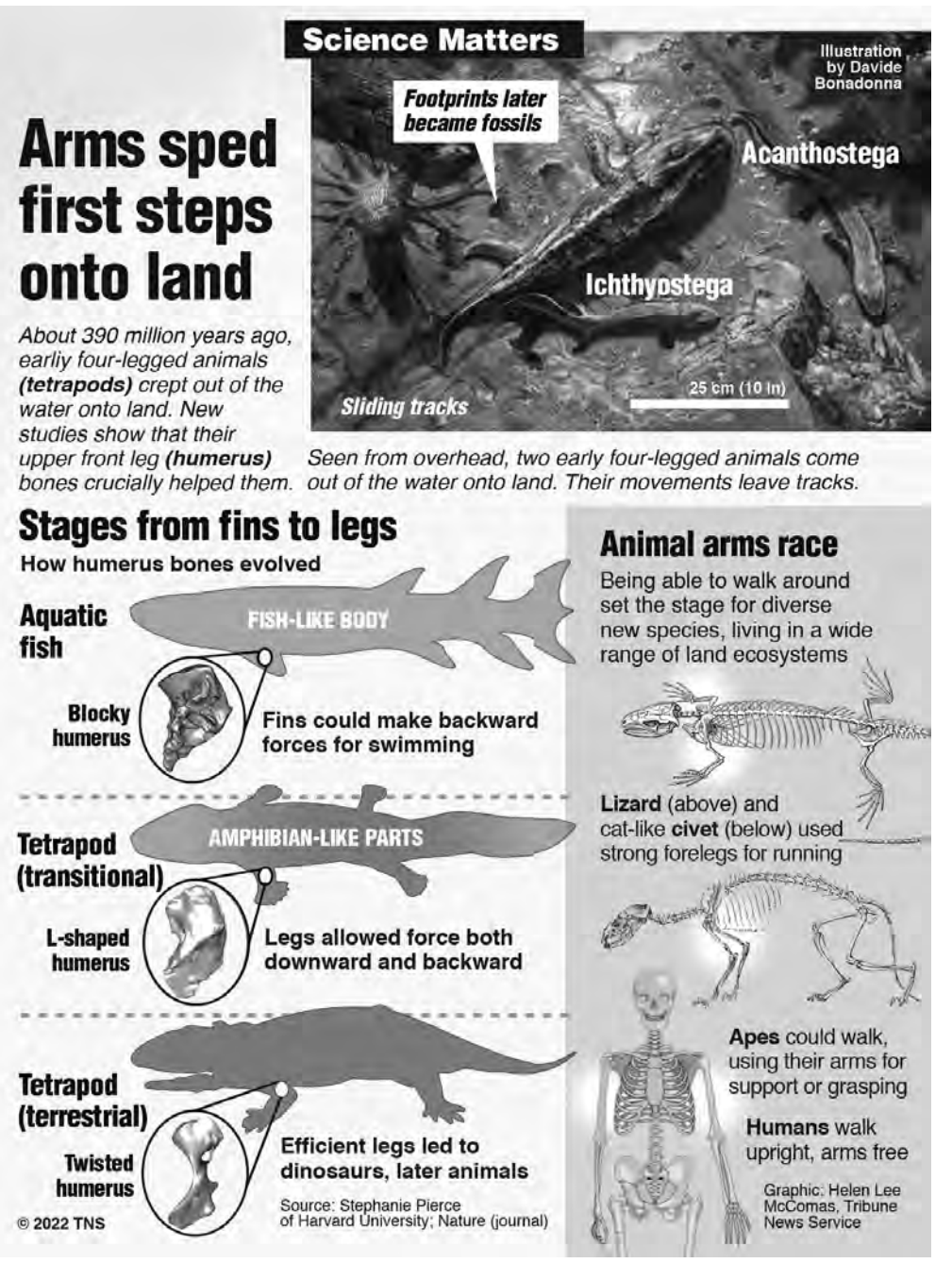
A second laboratory segment, the Mengtian, is due to be launched in October and will complete the space station.

A Long March 5B-Y3 rocket, China's most powerful, carried the laboratory module in the third such launch since the Chinese space station entered its construction phase. It was preceded by the Tianzhou-class cargo spacecraft and the Shenzhou-14 crewed spacecraft.

China's space program is run by the ruling Communist Party's military wing, the People's Liberation Army, and has largely proceeded with the Tiangong program without other nations' assistance. The U.S. excluded China from the International Space Station because of its military ties.

China launched its first astronaut into orbit in 2003, making it only the third country to do so on its own after the former Soviet Union and the U.S. Its space program has landed robot rovers on the moon and placed one on Mars last year. China has also returned lunar samples and officials have discussed a possible crewed mission to the moon.


Patterns in the sky
Some of the most popular types of fireworks:
Chrysanthemum
Full, fluffy pattern of stars that hold their shape before fading
Palm
Several large comets with a trunk created by a big fluffy tail
Comet
Big head and noticeable tail
Peony
Loose pattern of colored stars that breaks up, drops
Crossette
Comet that splits into small pieces
Spiral
Curve that winds out from a center point
Source: Melrose Pyrotechnics
Graphic: Staff, TNS


Science Matters
Illustration by Davide Bonadonna
Arms sped first steps onto land
About 390 million years ago, earliy four-legged animals (tetrapods) crept out of the water onto land. New studies show that their upper front leg (humerus) bones crucially helped them.
Footprints later became fossils
Acanthostega
Ichthyostega
Sliding tracks
25 cm (10 in)
Seen from overhead, two early four-legged animals come out of the water onto land. Their movements leave tracks.
Stages from fins to legs
How humerus bones evolved
Aquatic fish
FISH-LIKE BODY
Blocky humerus
Fins could make backward forces for swimming
Tetrapod (transitional)
AMPHIBIAN-LIKE PARTS
L-shaped humerus
Legs allowed force both downward and backward
Tetrapod (terrestrial)
Twisted humerus
Efficient legs led to dinosaurs, later animals
Source: Stephanie Pierce of Harvard University; Nature (journal)
© 2022 TNS
Animal arms race
Being able to walk around set the stage for diverse new species, living in a wide range of land ecosystems
Lizard (above) and cat-like civet (below) used strong forelegs for running
Apes could walk, using their arms for support or grasping
Humans walk upright, arms free
Graphic: Helen Lee McComas, Tribune News Service

Life & Style

Mayim Bialik, Ken Jennings to split 'Jeopardy!' host job

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Jeopardy!" is giving itself two answers to the question of who gets to host the quiz show — Mayim Bialik and Ken Jennings.

Bialik

Bialik and Jennings have been serving as rotating hosts since Mike Richards exited the show amid controversy after a short tenure as the late Alex Trebek's replacement.

Executive producer Michael Davies said in an announcement posted online Wednesday that deals were signed with Bialik and Jennings "to be the hosts of Jeopardy! moving forward."

"In Mayim and Ken, we have two outstanding hosts at the beginning of their Jeopardy! hosting careers who connect with their own unique fanbases, new fans, and the traditional Jeopardy! viewer," Davies said in the statement.

Jennings, an all-time "Jeopardy!" champion, and actor Bialik ("Call Me Kat," "The Big Bang Theory") were among the guest hosts who filled in after Trebek's death from cancer in 2020. While the stints were seen as tryouts, the job unexpectedly went to then-executive producer Richards last summer.

Jennings

At the same time, Bialik was given a role by "Jeopardy!" studio Sony as emcee for the show's prime-time and spinoff series, including a new college championship. It was viewed in part as an effort to placate fans who complained that the succession of guest hosts seemed like a publicity stunt and that the job was Richards' all along.

But Richards was quickly gone from the show following a report of his past unguarded and offensive comments on a podcast. Jennings and Bialik stepped in to share hosting duties as their schedules allowed.

Davies laid out details of how the job-sharing plan would work when the show begins its new season in September.

Jennings, who is also a "Jeopardy!" consulting producer, will kick off the season and host the Tournament of Champions with past winners including Amy Schneider, Matt Amodio, Matea Roach and Ryan Long. During that period, Bialik will host "Celebrity Jeopardy!" on ABC in prime time.

"When she takes over from Ken in January, the current plan is to have her host a couple of new tournaments as well as the Jeopardy! National College Championship" and whatever else her commitment to "Call Me Kat" will allow for with "Jeopardy!" Davies said.

Elizabeth Strout, Leila Mottley up for Booker fiction prize

LONDON (AP)—Best-selling American writers Karen Joy Fowler, Elizabeth Strout and Leila Mottley are among 13 authors in the running for the prestigious Booker Prize for fiction.

Fowler's novel about Abraham Lincoln's assassin, "Booth," Strout's symphony of everyday lives "Oh William!" and Mottley's Oakland-set debut "Nightcrawling" are among six books by Americans on the longlist for the 50,000 pound ($60,000) prize. The list announced Tuesday also includes authors from Britain, Ireland, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe.

At 20, Mottley is the youngest-ever Booker Prize contender. A tale of racism and sexual exploitation written when she was still a teenager, "Nightcrawling" has won rave reviews and selection by Oprah's Book Club.

British fantasy author Alan Garner, on the list for "Treacle Walker," is the oldest-ever Booker nominee at 87.

Five awards judges selected the contenders from 169 books submitted by publishers. Former British Museum director Neil MacGregor, who is chairing the judging panel, said the list "offers story, fable and parable, fantasy, mystery, meditation and thriller." He said many of the books have plots driven by "long histories of conflict and injustice" and grapple with "the elusive nature of truth."

Mottley is one of three debut novelists are on the list, alongside Britain's Maddie Mortimer ("Maps of Our Spectacular Bodies") and American author Selby Wynn Schwartz ("After Sappho").

Shawn Mendes cancels world tour to prioritize his health

Shawn Mendes has pulled the plug on the rest of his world tour, cancelling dates in North America and Europe so he can focus on his mental health.

"I was not at all ready for how difficult touring would be after this time away," the singer-songwriter posted on social media Wednesday.

"After speaking more with my team and working with an incredible group of health professionals, it has become more clear that I need to take the time I've never taken personally, to ground myself and come back stronger."

Shawn Mendes arrives at the 62nd annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles, Jan. 26, 2020. AP

Mendes has had six top 10 hits on the Billboard Hot 100, including "There's Nothing Holdin' Me Back," "If I Can't Have You" and "Senorita" with his ex-girlfriend Camila Cabello.

Mendes kicked off his world tour in support of his album "Wonder" in June, but earlier this month said he needed to take a three-week break. That break has now stretched into the whole tour.

Spain: Shakira rejects prosecutors' offer, faces tax trial

MADRID (AP)—Colombian pop singer Shakira has opted to go to trial instead of accepting a deal offered by Spanish prosecutors to settle allegations she defrauded Spain's government of 14.5 million euros ($15 million) in taxes, her public relations team said Wednesday.

Shakira, 45, "trusts her innocence and chooses to leave the issue in the hands of the law," the PR firm Llorente y Cuenca said in a statement.

Spanish prosecutors charged the singer in 2018 with failing to pay 14.5 million euros in taxes on income earned between 2012 and 2014. She faces a possible fine and prison sentence, if found guilty of tax evasion.

Shakira

There were no immediate details available on the deal prosecutors offered. No date for the trial has been set.

Shakira's public relations firm said she has deposited the amount she is said to owe with the Spanish Tax Agency and has no pending tax debts.

The case hinges on where she lived during 2012-14. Prosecutors allege it was mostly in Spain even though Shakira's official residence was in the Bahamas.

Shakira, whose full name is Shakira Isabel Mebarak Ripoll, has two children with Barcelona soccer star Gerard Pique. The couple used to live together in Barcelona but recently ended their 11-year relationship.

Employees make sacrifices caring for dying co-worker

DEAR ABBY: A co-worker has been stricken with multiple stage-4 cancers. We all have been compassionate and caring, supporting him through the challenges of treatment and the side effects. His condition is terminal, in the final stage and deteriorating rapidly. He does have a supportive family, but we don't have the heart to send him home and take away the only thing that gives him his reason to live—his work. So we spend our time providing hospice care, something none of us have any training for.

Our work environment has become increasingly stressful and anxious, and it's overflowing onto our friends and families, not to mention the toll it has taken on our company. I need to make a choice—to place my family and my well-being first, take a leave of absence and abandon my co-workers, or stay in support and have a front-row seat to the imminent passing.

911 ON SPEED DIAL

DEAR 911: This is something you should discuss with your employer. Neither you nor your co-workers are trained caregivers, and no one should be administering medical care because of possible liability to the company.

You are obviously a sensitive and caring person. However, if the situation has become more stressful than you can manage, it's time to take a step back. To do so isn't "abandoning" anyone; it is looking after your own mental health so you can provide for your family.

DEAR ABBY: My parents divorced when I was a small child. My father remarried when I was 10, and I loved my stepmother dearly. She died in 1994 after 27 years of marriage. Daddy then met another lovely woman I'll call "Eileen," whom he dated for many years. By this time, I was nearly 40 and living 1,000 miles away from them. He eventually moved in with her, but they didn't actually marry until 2018. Eileen is only 13 years older than I am, so I have always thought of her as "my father's third wife," not "my stepmother."

Daddy died last year, and I'm not sure how much of a relationship I want to maintain with Eileen, or how to refer to her when I have occasion to introduce her to someone. She was extraordinarily good to my father (better than he deserved, I might add), and I'm grateful for that, but the link that tied us is now gone.

She's coming to visit soon. Introducing her to my friends as "Dad's third wife" seems a bit cold, but introducing her as "my stepmother" would mischaracterize our relationship. She had no children of her own, and I don't want to give her the impression that I have bonded to her as if she were my mother. Please help.

CHALLENGED IN THE SOUTH

DEAR CHALLENGED: Treat Eileen as you would want to be treated if the situation were reversed. Introduce her WARMLY as "Eileen." If further clarification is needed, she is "Daddy's widow." That she is third in the line-up does not need to be mentioned. As to giving her the impression that you feel bonded to her, don't obsess over it. Your relationship with her is either warm and rewarding, or it isn't. If it is only obligatory, ask yourself why you feel the need to keep her at arm's length, and act accordingly.

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

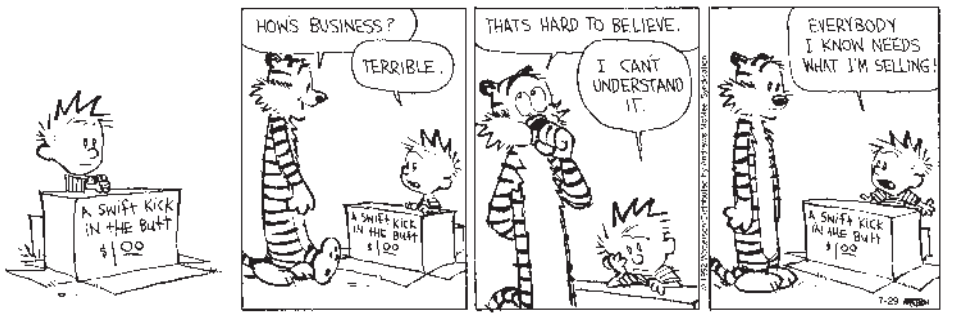
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $16 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


A SWIFT KICK IN THE BUTT $1.00
HOW'S BUSINESS?
TERRIBLE.
THAT'S HARD TO BELIEVE.
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT.
EVERYBODY I KNOW NEEDS WHAT I'M SELLING!

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

WHAT'S YOUR DAD DOING?
BUILDING HIS YARD ART.
SIGH.
THE GARRETTS SCULPTURE IS AWFUL, BUT HE MAY BE TAKING THIS TOO FAR.
HOW FAR ALONG IS HE?
THE 20-FOOT FOUND ART CHIMPANZEE IS UP, BUT THE 'LIGHTSHOW OF DOOM' ISN'T FUNCTIONAL YET.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Platters
6 Chum
9 Club —
12 Put on — (act)
13 Expert serve
14 Navarro of "The View"
15 Gettysburg general
16 William on "Star Trek"
18 Vatican term
20 Folklore monster
21 Blackbird
23 Airport screening org.
24 Offered one's seat
25 Taverns
27 Plant life
29 Perfect place
31 Zesty dips
35 Blood line?
37 Model in a bottle
38 Future oak
41 Luau instrument
43 Canine greeting
44 Wander
45 Pencil end
47 Subtle variation of color
49 Spanish snacks
52 Feedbag morsel
53 Memo letters
54 Levels
55 SSW opposite
56 Feeling down
57 Transmits

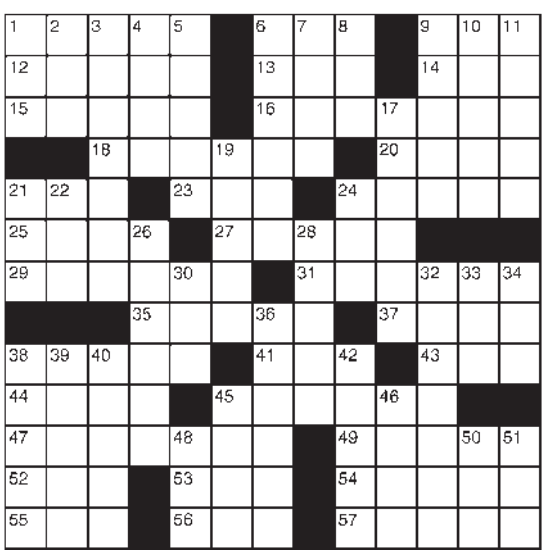
DOWN

1 River blocker
2 British verb ending
3 NPR's Ari
4 Musical finale
5 Used a broom
6 Computer language
7 Needing a massage
8 Tony winner Salonga
9 Chutney fruit
10 January, to Juan
11 Challenged
17 Sums
19 Equally distant
21 Dhabi preceder
22 Rebel Turner
24 Madrid Mrs.
26 Went easy on
28 Japanese seaport
30 Bit of physics
32 Hone
33 Football filler
34 Suntan lotion letters
36 Overblown
38 Incendiary crime
39 "Over There" composer
40 Egg-shaped
42 — Park, Colorado
45 "May It Be" singer
46 Roof edge
48 Conditions
50 Moreover
51 Snake's sound

Solution time: 25 mins.

A	H	C	S		W	E	B		I	W	O	N
S	E	A	L		O	V	O		N	O	G	O
H	I	L	O		O	O	O		T	O	R	O
E	N	F	O	L	C		B	O	A	D	E	R
			P	A	R			R	O	W		
R	E	F	S		U	P	A	I	S	I	N	G
A	L	I			F	R	O			N	E	U
G	I	R	A	F	F	E	S		G	O	A	Y
		E	T	D			E	M	O			
A	T	W	O	R	K		W	R	E	C	K	S
G	O	O	N		L	C	O		T	R	I	O
O	T	O	E		U	S	O		H	A	N	D
G	O	D	S		M	E	D		E	G	G	S

Yesterday's answer 7-29



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Munro Chambers, 32; Genesis Rodriguez, 35; Jason Belmonte, 39; Martina McBride, 56.

Happy Birthday: Remain calm, regardless of what's happening around you this year. Use your intelligence and intuition to guide you through the good times and bad. Refuse to let other people's uncertainty bring you down or stand between you and what you want to create. Be bold, do your research, and discover and implement your ideas with confidence. Your numbers are 6, 13, 24, 26, 31, 38, 43.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Check the facts, set the pace and don't stop until you achieve your goal. A problem at home mustn't dictate how well you handle responsibilities. When in doubt, get the facts and proceed with confidence. Anger and envy will lead to loss. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* You'll face confusion if you or someone else sends mixed messages. Consider what you want and don't lose sight of your objective. Recognize when someone is trying to use you to get ahead. Concentrate on self-improvement. ✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Carefully pick out the people you choose to spend time with. Take pride in living a healthy lifestyle. Take the lead instead of following someone less likely to put themselves first. Make your destination of choice one of peace and love.✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* The more you give, the more you'll get in return. A labor of love will make you feel good about yourself and those you work alongside. Think, and you'll develop a prosperous plan that invites you to make a move. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Shoot for stability, security and a steady pace forward. Leave nothing to chance or in someone else's hands. A broad view implemented practically will help shed light on what's possible. Refuse to let anyone mislead or take advantage of you. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Haste makes waste. Implement discipline and pay attention to detail. Don't overlook something that can make a difference in the outcome of a matter that can influence your income. Do things right the first time. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* A call for help will put you in good company. Do your best and make a difference, and good things will transpire. Look for an opportunity, and you'll regain momentum and initiate a friendship with someone who can help you advance. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Go over every detail before agreeing on something based on emotions. A change may appear to be your only option, but if you view your situation from a distance, you'll find a solution that saves you time and money. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* There is money to be made if you are diligent about doing what you do best and marketing what you have to offer. Putting more time and effort into your surroundings will make it easier to work from home. ✪✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

COPYRIGHT 2007 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* A change will bring you peace of mind, but it may not please everyone. Refuse to let someone use emotional manipulation to sway your opinion. You must go with your gut and do what's best for you. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Two unique options you receive will lead to temptation. When in doubt, sit tight and wait for a sign that indicates what to do next. Time is on your side and will allow you to recognize what's in your best interest. Opportunity knocks. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Don't take on more than you can handle or let temptation lead the way. Pace yourself and focus on self-improvement. Keep your life simple. Make physical strength and good health your objectives. Romance is encouraged. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are dramatic, playful and precise. You are dedicated and persistent.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

4					9			2
	5			7			9	
		3	5			7		
9						8		
	3			5			4	
		1						9
		6			7	3		
	4			8			7	
2			1					8

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 7/29

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

4	8	2	3	9	5	7	6	1
6	5	7	4	2	1	9	3	8
3	9	1	6	8	7	2	4	5
5	3	9	8	1	6	4	7	2
1	4	6	5	7	2	8	9	3
2	7	8	9	3	4	1	5	6
9	6	4	2	5	8	3	1	7
8	1	5	7	4	3	6	2	9
7	2	3	1	6	9	5	8	4

©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

SEEN ON A TEENAGER'S SHELF Solution: 8 letters

S	K	O	O	B	P	A	R	C	S	R	S	P	C	P
R	H	E	D	E	C	O	R	P	E	S	Y	A	H	I
E	A	A	L	S	L	O	O	T	E	R	L	O	A	G
D	T	R	O	E	R	R	T	M	D	E	T	T	R	G
N	S	O	B	R	T	U	A	N	N	O	R	S	G	Y
I	R	O	I	A	L	R	U	D	G	O	T	N	E	B
M	E	M	S	C	F	A	A	R	P	E	A	O	R	A
E	L	S	N	N	L	R	A	H	K	R	P	V	Y	N
R	L	T	A	I	E	P	I	C	T	U	R	E	S	K
E	O	E	G	K	H	E	O	W	E	E	N	L	T	N
D	R	G	O	S	S	S	O	K	M	O	O	S	E	O
A	T	D	L	K	Ⓟ	R	A	O	M	T	I	E	L	B
E	N	I	S	Ⓞ	K	M	T	R	I	N	G	D	B	B
R	O	F	Ⓟ	R	B	E	S	O	M	U	B	L	A	I
E	C	A	L	K	C	E	N	W	A	L	L	E	T	R

©2022 Andrews McMeel Syndication www.wonderword.com 7/29

Album, Artwork, Bold, Calendar, Charger, Clutter, Controllers, Decor, E-reader, Fidgets, Frames, Globe, Hats, Laundry, Lotion, Makeup, Mirror, Money, Necklace, Novels, Photographs, Pictures, Piggy Bank, Pop, Radio, Reminders, Remote, Ribbon, Ring, Room, Scrapbook, Shelf, Skin Care, Slogans, Sockets, Sport, Tablet, Tools, Trophies, Wallet

Yesterday's Answer: Confectionery

To purchase **Jo's Jewels Collector's Edition**, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com or call 1-800-642-6480.

Harden, 76ers make it official on 2-year, $68M deal

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—James Harden decided to grow his beard and shear his annual salary in Philadelphia.

Harden signed a deal worth slightly over $68 million, paying him about $33 million this season with a $35 million player option for the 2023-24 season. Harden, though, will make about $14.5 million less this coming season than he could have earned under his previous deal. Harden had a $47.4 million option for this coming season that he declined last month, saying he wanted to give the 76ers flexibility to improve their roster and compete for a championship.

"This is where I want to be. This is where I want to win, and I think we have the pieces to accomplish that goal," Harden said Wednesday. "From my first day with the 76ers organization, the team and the fans have helped me feel at home here in Philadelphia. I'm excited to build off of last season and I can't wait to get out on the court with the guys and start this journey."

Daryl Morey, team president of basketball operations, posted a photo on Instagram of him posing alongside Harden as the 10-time All-Star guard known as "The Beard" signed his contract.

"Now this looks like a job for we, " Morey wrote.

Harden's plans have been clear since Philadelphia's season ended: He was committed to staying with the 76ers and committed to help them get better.

"Taking less money this year to sign as many players as we needed to help us contend and be the last team

AP

Philadelphia 76ers' James Harden reacts during the first half of Game 4 of an NBA basketball second-round playoff series against the Miami Heat on May 8, 2022, in Philadelphia.

standing was very, very important to me," Harden said in an interview this month with The Associated Press. "I wanted to show the organization, the Sixers fans and everybody else who supports what we're trying to accomplish, what I'm trying to accomplish individually, that this is what I'm about."

Harden vowed to return to for after battling a lingering hamstring injury that cut his production with the Brooklyn Nets, and later the Sixers, after he was acquired in a trade-deadline deal.

"Over the last two years we have taken major steps toward our ultimate goal of becoming champions," said coach Doc Rivers. "James shares our drive to win a title, and he believes being a 76er gives him the best opportunity to do that. Together, we will work tirelessly to achieve our goal."

A member of the NBA's 75th Anniversary Team, Harden averaged 22 points this season for Brooklyn and Philadelphia, his lowest since he became a starter in the 2012-13 season. He turns 33 in August.

Harden, a three-time scoring champion, told the AP he was nonplussed about taking "less" money to return and chase a championship in Philly.

"For any other players, that's a max contract," he said of his lower numbers, "but it's like, for me, I was not the same James Harden.

The 76ers lost to top-seeded Miami in the second round of the playoffs. Harden had four turnovers, four baskets and did not score in the second half in the decisive Game 6 loss. They haven't advanced past the second round since 2001. Their last NBA championship came in 1983.

"Coming back and being the aggressor, the scorer first and then the playmaker, is something that I need for myself," he said.

Harden has appeared in 942 games (728 starts) with Philadelphia, Brooklyn, Houston and Oklahoma City and holds averages of 24.9 points, 5.6 rebounds, 6.8 assists and 1.5 steals.

Suns extend contract of NBA's Coach of the Year Williams

PHOENIX (AP)—The Phoenix Suns have officially agreed to a multi-year contract extension for Monty Williams, the NBA's Coach of the Year last season after leading the franchise to a team-record 64 wins in the regular season.

The team announced the extension Wednesday. No other contract details were given.

Williams, 50, has led a quick turnaround in three seasons with the Suns, taking them to the NBA Finals in 2021 where they lost in six games to the Milwaukee Bucks. It was the first time the franchise had been to the Finals since 1993. They were the No. 1 seed in the Western Conference last season, but fell in the second round to the Dallas Mavericks.

"I'm grateful to extend my commitment to this team and to all the people who make it a special place," Williams said in a statement. "Our players put in the work every day that allows us to be successful, and I'm excited to continue this journey with them."

Williams was 34-39 in his first season with the Suns but the team built momentum down the stretch, winning their final eight regular-season games in the NBA's Florida bubble that was needed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Suns then added star point guard Chris Paul, paired him with young scorer Devin Booker in the backcourt, and quickly built a high-scoring, high-energy team that's been among the NBA's best. Since entering the Florida bubble, the Suns have a 123-39 record during regular-season games.

6-10 Han Xu making mark in WNBA, China

NEW YORK (AP)—Han Xu understandably grew up idolizing Yao Ming, mesmerized by the giant shadow the 7-foot-6 Hall of Famer cast each time he stepped onto an NBA court.

Standing 6-10, Han would like to emulate Yao's impact — including his influence on the sport in China. The New York Liberty post player wants to be a female beacon of basketball in her native land.

Han is on her way. Fans can't seem to get enough of the 22-year-old budding star.

"Han and Li (Yueru) have been creating hype online and offline. Many girls have been inspired by Han and Li, and we have numbers to show that more girls have started participating in basketball on all levels," said China basketball analyst Michael Yuan, founder of Team Fountainhead. "We can also clearly see more news coverage and other kinds of user generated content on China's social media platform."

Han's highlights have garnered millions of views on streaming platforms in China. Kuaishou, a global social media platform, recently hosted a livestreaming session with her that generated about 1.6 million views.

Han and the 6-7 Li, who is with the Chicago Sky, are the latest of a half dozen Chinese players to have spent time in the WNBA. The first to have an impact in the league was Haixia Zheng, who averaged 8.9 points in two seasons with the Los Angeles Sparks in 1997 and 1998 — starting 21 games her first year.

"Homegrown players like Han Xu and Li Yueru succeeding at the highest level drives interest among China's passionate basketball fans and inspires Chinese youth to play the game," said Jonathan Li, senior vice president of NBA China

Chinese fans became aware of Han and Li Yueru during their stints with the Olympic team that finished fifth in Tokyo. But their fan base has grown since both were drafted in 2019 — Han in the second round, Li in the third.

"I was very honored to be able to come here to make my dream come true in 2019," Han said through a translator. "At that moment, I just wanted to grow up gradually, to learn from the veteran players who compete in the world highest-level basketball league.

"And I also hoped to be able to promote the sport in China with my influence here."

Like her childhood hero: the 7-6 Yao.

"He had a very successful career in NBA and he also promoted the culture of the sport in China so that now more Chinese people like to watch basketball," Han said. "I hope I can also make some influence in WNBA and then transfer my influence back to my country and let more fans to see the performance from a Chinese player."

Neither Han nor the 6-7 Li, who turned 23 in March, were born when Zheng was doing her WNBA thing in L.A. And neither have Yao's skills — and they may never be as good, not many are.

The Houston Rockets made Yao the No. 1 overall pick in the 2002 NBA draft. He has become an ambassador of the game in China and is currently a Chinese basketball executive.

Though Han and Li are still honing their skills, the players' popularity is on the rise in China.

Han is averaging 9.2 points and shooting nearly 54% from the field while playing about 18 minutes a game with the Liberty. Li hasn't had as much success, averaging just 2 points a game in Chicago.

When they played in New York last month, a handful of Chinese media were on hand. Interviews with the players drew millions of views in China. They will square off again on Saturday and it will be broadcast live in China.

"The population of Chinese basketball fans is huge," Li said through a translator. "Fans in China, while they are watching me and Han Xu highlights, will get to know more WNBA players and WNBA teams. I think this is a thing that could benefit me and Han Xu but also could benefit the WNBA as well."

Both Han and Li have excelled in the offseason in the Chinese Basketball League that has had WNBA players such as Maya Moore and Sylvia Fowles play in it.

"When I was growing up there were a lot of WNBA players who I looked up to," Li said. "There is a lot of WNBA players who I think no matter in what aspect in life or in their career, I think (in) all those aspects they are doing a great job. They are excellent."

Han has shown flashes that she could be dominant force in the WNBA. She scored a career-high 24 points against Las Vegas earlier this month.

"I think it's a great honor that domestic fans can watch WNBA games on TV in China," Han said. "I think when fans in China watch my play in the league, they can get a better idea about the development of this sport in overseas."

Pujols hits 3-run HR, Cards overcome absences, beat Jays

TORONTO (AP)— Albert Pujols hit a three-run homer and finished with three hits, passing Rogers Hornsby on St. Louis' career list, and the Cardinals stopped Toronto's seven-game win streak with a 6-1 victory over the Blue Jays on Wednesday night.

Adam Wainwright pitched seven sparkling innings to help St. Louis earn a split of the two-game set while playing without unvaccinated sluggers Paul Goldschmidt and Nolan Arenado. Nolan Gorman homered, and Dylan Carlson and Lars Nootbaar each hit an RBI double.

Foreign nationals who aren't vaccinated against COVID-19 are not allowed to enter Canada, save for limited exceptions that require a 14-day quarantine. Unvaccinated baseball players are placed on the restricted list, where they are not paid and do not accrue major league service time.

Goldschmidt, Arenado, and catcher Austin Romine, who all went on the restricted list Tuesday, will be eligible to return when the Cardinals begin a three-game series at Washington on Friday.

Facing Blue Jays right-hander Kevin Gausman, Pujols singled in the second and doubled in the fourth. The hits were his 2,110th and 2,111th with the Cardinals, moving him past Hornsby for fourth-most in franchise history.

"That's what you're hoping for, is him to step up and be able to carry us at a time when we didn't have Goldy and Nolan, and he did exactly that," Cardinals manager Oliver Marmol said. "He knew what was on the line and that we were going to have to depend on him."

Gausman left after walking Tyler O'Neill in the fifth and Pujols greeted Trevor Richards with his seventh homer of the season and No. 686 for his career. Pujols ranks fifth on baseball's homer list, 10 behind Alex Rodriguez.

"He's unbelievable," Wainwright said of Pujols. "He might be old but he can still hit."

An 11-time All-Star and three-time NL MVP, Pujols flied out to center in his final at-bat in the seventh.

"I'm ready to hit wherever they put me in the lineup," said Pujols, who batted fourth in both games against the Blue Jays.

Pitching in Toronto for the first time since June 24, 2010, Wainwright (7-8) allowed one run and five hits for his first victory since June 27 against Miami. He bounced back nicely after allowing a season-worst seven runs in his previous outing, a loss at Cincinnati.

"Just a great opportunity to go out and prove that I still had what it takes to be a great pitcher in this game," Wainwright said. "I had a good curveball tonight, good cutter. Still got to work on fastball command a bit but my spin was good tonight."

Bo Bichette's two-out RBI single in the fourth brought home Toronto's lone run.

Gausman (7-8) allowed five runs and eight hits in 4 2/3 innings. He has won just once in his past four outings.

"Obviously, I was in the clubhouse a lot earlier than I wanted to be," Gausman said.

Gorman hit an opposite-field homer off Gausman to begin the fifth, his 10th.

At 42 years, 192 days, Pujols is the oldest player to hit a home run at Rogers Centre/SkyDome, which opened in 1989.

Toronto is 11-11 in July. The Blue Jays lost nine of their first 11 games this month.

Blue Jays slugger Vladimir Guerrero Jr. swiped second in the fourth for his first stolen base of the season.

AP

St. Louis Cardinals' Albert Pujols gestures to the dugout after hitting a double off Toronto Blue Jays starting pitcher Kevin Gausman during the fourth inning of a baseball game Wednesday, July 27, 2022, in Toronto.

Mets 3, Yankees 2

In New York, Starling Marte singled home the winning run in the ninth inning, and the Mets beat the Yankees for a two-game sweep of their Subway Series.

Max Scherzer was marvelous on his 38th birthday, striking out Aaron Judge three times to help the Mets take a 2-0 lead into the eighth. Gleyber Torres tied it with a two-run homer off David Peterson.

Pete Alonso homered early off Domingo Germán, and Francisco Lindor had an RBI single for the Mets before a sellout crowd at Citi Field. Seth Lugo (2-2) struck out three in 1 2/3 scoreless innings for the win.

Wandy Peralta (2-3), who entered in the ninth on his 31st birthday, surrendered Marte's game-ending hit.

Less than an hour after the game, the slumping Yankees boosted their lineup by acquiring outfielder Andrew Benintendi from Kansas City in a trade for three minor leaguers.

Athletics 4, Astros 2

In Oakland, Calif., Cole Irvin allowed four hits over seven innings, and Oakland earned its first winning sweep in 32 series this season.

Oakland, an AL-worst 38-63, won three in a row from AL West-leading Houston (64-35) and has won six of its last eight against the Astros. Houston was swept in a series for the first time since last Sept. 24-26, also at Oakland.

Stephen Vogt and Stephen Piscotty homered on back-to-back fastballs in the second from Cristian Javier (6-6). Tony Kemp had three hits, including an RBI double.

Irvin (6-7) struck out four and walked one. A.J. Puk pitched a 1-2-3 ninth for his second save, finishing a five-hitter.

Mariners 3, Rangers 2

In Seattle, Julio Rodríguez hit a go-ahead, three-run homer in the seventh off Jon Gray (7-5), a day after the 21-year-old rookie sensation had a leadoff home run in the first, and Seattle finished a three-game sweep.

Marco Gonzales (6-10) allowed two runs and four hits in seven innings, and Matt Festa pitched a scoreless ninth inning for his second save.

Seattle is 11-2 against the Rangers this year.

Dodgers 7, Nationals 1

In Los Angeles, Hanser Alberto had a two-run double during a six-run first as Los Angeles avoided a three-game sweep.

Gavin Lux had three hits and drove in two runs, while Mookie Betts reached base four times for the NL-leading Dodgers (65-32), who have won 19 of 21 before losing twice to major league-worst Nationals (34-66). Alex Vesia (3-0) pitched a scoreless sixth.

Patrick Corbin (4-14) got two outs in the shortest of his 250 starts, allowing six runs, seven hits and a walk.

Brewers 10, Twins 4

In Milwaukee, Rowdy Tellez hit a pair of three-run homers, Corbin Burnes won his fifth straight decision and Milwaukee swept a two-game series between Central Division leaders.

Tellez homered off Chris Archer (2-5) for a 3-0 lead in the first and against Jharel Cotton for an 8-3 advantage in a five-run fourth. Tellez has 20 homers, one shy of his career high in 2019 with Toronto.

Burnes (8-4) struck out 11 in six innings, reaching double digits for the eighth time this year. Archer tied his career high with six walks.

Reds 5, Marlins 3

In Cincinatti, Luis Castillo pitched seven effective innings in likely his final start with Cincinnati.

Castillo is one of the top players on the market ahead of Tuesday's trade deadline. The Reds are last in the NL Central, and the talented right-hander could help push a contender over the top.

Castillo (4-4) allowed three runs — including JJ Bleday's first big league homer — and six hits. He also struck out eight and walked one in his first start since July 14.

Nick Fortes also homered for Miami, which has dropped seven of 10. Braxton Garrett (2-4) struck out eight in five innings, but was charged with five runs and seven hits.

After Castillo departed, Alexis Díaz got three outs before Hunter Strickland earned his sixth save.

Phillies 7, Braves 2

In Philadelphia, Alec Bohm hit a go-ahead single in a five-run fifth and added an RBI double in the sixth, helping Philadelphia take two of three from Atlanta.

Kyle Gibson (6-4) allowed two runs and four hits in six innings.

Errors by Charlie Morton (5-5) and second baseman Robinson Canó contributed to the Phillies' fifth-inning rally capped by J.T. Realmuto's two-run single.

Morton allowed five runs — four earned — and six hits in five innings.

Rays 6, Orioles 4, 10 innings

In Baltimore, Randy Arozarena hit a two-run double off All-Star reliever Jorge López in the 10th inning, and Tampa Bay Rays stopped a four-game losing streak.

Baltimore's Jorge Mateo sent the game into extra innings with a one-out solo shot in the ninth off Colin Poche (3-1). One night earlier, Poche entered in the eighth inning with a one-run lead and yielded a two-run homer.

This time, however, Tampa Bay rebounded from his mistake.

An infield hit and a walk loaded the bases for Arozarena, who ripped a pitch from López (4-6) to the base of the right-field wall.

Pete Fairbanks got three straight outs in the bottom half for his first save.

Guardians 7, Red Sox 6

In Bostin, Josh Naylor hit a solo homer in the ninth inning, and Cleveland took advantage of three errors by Boston first baseman Franchy Cordero.

Bobby Dalbec hit two homers and drove in five runs for the Red Sox, who have lost seven of eight and 15 of 19.

Naylor connected for his 14th homer with one out off Tanner Houck (5-4).

Enyel De Los Santos (2-0) pitched 1 1/3 scoreless innings for the win. Emmanuel Clase worked a scoreless ninth for this 21st save.

Angels 4, Royals 0

In Kansas City, Mo., Janson Junk (1-0) pitched five-plus innings of four-hit ball for the Angels, earning his first major league win.

Shohei Ohtani reached base three times and drove in a run, and the Angels got their first series win since June 27-29 against the Chicago White Sox.

Brad Keller (5-11) allowed three runs on six hits and three walks in six innings.

Tigers 4, Padres 3

In Detroit, Victor Reyes hit a two-out, two-run double in the ninth off Taylor Rogers (1-5), a drive over right fielder Nomar Mazara.

Michael Fulmer (3-4) pitched a scoreless ninth. The Padres are 14-21 since June 16.

Diamondbacks 5, Giants 3

In Phoenix, Josh Rojas homered and Arizona scored two runs on Jose Herrera's squeeze bunt in the seventh inning to extend San Francisco's losing streak to seven.

Noé Ramirez (3-3) allowed a run on one hit in 1 1/3 innings and Mark Melancon worked around two runners for his 14th save.

Logan Webb (9-4) Webb allowed four runs and four hits in 6 1/3 innings.

Rockies 6, White Sox 5

In Denver, Elias Díaz hit a two-run single after Kendall Graveman (3-2) walked the bases loaded in the ninth inning.

Colorado starter Anthony Senzatela, making his second start since returning from a shoulder injury, left after 6 2/3 innings when Leury García hit a comebacker off the pitcher's left shin that rolled away for a single. Lucas Gilbreath allowed Tim Anderson's RBI single and AJ Pollock's two-run single as the White Sox went ahead 5-3.

José Iglesias had an RBI single in the bottom half off José Ruiz. Robert Stephenson (2-1) pitched a perfect ninth as Colorado won for the second time in seven games.

National tennis team to do their best in Fiji

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The CNMI National Tennis Team will use the experience they gained from the recent Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022 to play their best in the Pacific Nations Cup set from Aug. 1 to 7 in Nadi, Fiji.

"We'll be taking the experience and wisdom imparted on us by coach Jeff Race. In my capacity as both player and coach, I can guarantee that we will show up and give each match our all. The competition will be fierce, but we've prepared. We'll be leaning into discomfort and pushing our limits and learning as players and as a team. While I can't predict the outcome of the competition, I am certain of the fight we'll bring, and I know the team will emerge undoubtedly having grown from the experience. As always, our goal is to make the CNMI proud," said Bobby Cruz.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The CNMI National Tennis Team to the Pacific Nations Cup are joined by Robbie Schorr, second from left, and Tahiti national netter Heimanarii Lao San, second from right, during a practice session at the American Memorial Park tennis courts. From left, Colin Ramsay, Schorr, Isabel Herras, Bobby Cruz, San, and Hye Jin Elliot.

Joining the Public School System director of Instructional Technology and Distance Education in the CNMI's team for the Pacific Nations Cup are Colin Ramsay, Isabel Herras, and Hye Jin Elliott.

Sponsored by the International Tennis Federation, the Pacific Nations Cup gathers the Top 64 players from 15 member nations of Pacific Oceania to compete in a week-long tournament.

Cruz said he and the rest of the national tennis team will depart for Fiji on July 30 and take a long flight transiting through Korea and Sydney, Australia before arriving in Nadi.

"The team hopes to build on the success of the Pacific Mini Games and continue to gain experience in preparation for both the Micronesian Games and the Pacific Games which are fast approaching. The goal is to execute the hard work put in over the summer," said Cruz.

The 2023 Micronesian Games will be held in Majuro, Marshall Islands and the 2023 Pacific Games will be hosted by Honiara, Solomon Islands.

The playing coach also thanked the national team's many sponsors for helping them raise funds to finance their trip to the Pacific Nations Cup.

"The cost for participation was exorbitant, however, with the support of Paradise Dental, the Rotary Club of Saipan, Tan Siu Lin Foundation, IT&E, and many generous community donors the team will represent the NMI in the prestigious tennis event," he said.

Fajardo is SGA June Ace

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Mariano Fajardo is the Saipan Golfers Association June Ace of the Month winner after registering the net score to beat last June 17 at the Coral Ocean Resort.

Veteran of Foreign Wars Post 3457 quartermaster topped a field of 11 after shooting a net score of 65. The winning total was built around a 92 gross (46-46) for the 27-handicapper.

Tony Deleon Guerrero came in second with his net 66. The 20-handicapper fired identical 43s in the front and back nines for a gross of 86.

Das Krishnan and Rick Kautz tied for third place with similar net scores of 70. The former, however, edged the latter via scorecard tiebreak to enter the Top 3.

Krishnan finished with a 40-40 for a gross of 80, which minus his 10 handicap, gave him the net score of 70.

Kautz, for his part, carded a 39-43 for a pre-handicap score of 82.

With the June win, Mariano now joins Edward C. Sablan (January), Frances M. Sablan (February), Nick C. Sablan (March), Larry I. Deleon Guerrero (April), and Alex Tudela (May) in the 2022 SGA Ace of the Year tourney.

In the closest to the pin competition, Fajardo was without peer in hole No. 3, while former national golfer Nick Sablan won hole No. 7. Jung Eun Teack beat all comers in hole No. 12 with Attorney General Edward Manibusan ruling hole No. 14.

In the longest drive, Tony Benavente brought the lumber in holes No. 6 and 18.

The SGA 2022 July Ace of the Month Tournament is set this Sunday, July 31, at Laolao Bay Golf & Resort. Tee time is at 9am and showtime at 8:30 am.

Fajardo

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	66	33	.667	_
Toronto	54	44	.551	11½
Tampa Bay	53	45	.541	12½
Baltimore	49	49	.500	16½
Boston	49	50	.495	17

Central Division

Minnesota	52	46	.531	_
Cleveland	50	47	.515	1½
Chicago	49	49	.500	3
Detroit	40	59	.404	12½
Kansas City	39	59	.398	13

West Division

Houston	64	35	.646	_
Seattle	54	45	.545	10
Texas	43	54	.443	20
Los Angeles	42	56	.429	21½
Oakland	38	63	.376	27

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

New York	61	37	.622	_
Atlanta	59	41	.590	3
Philadelphia	51	47	.520	10
Miami	46	52	.469	15
Washington	34	66	.340	28

Central Division

Milwaukee	55	44	.556	_
St. Louis	52	47	.525	3
Chicago	40	57	.412	14
Pittsburgh	40	58	.408	14½
Cincinnati	38	59	.392	16

West Division

Los Angeles	65	32	.670	_
San Diego	55	45	.550	11½
San Francisco	48	50	.490	17½
Arizona	45	53	.459	20½
Colorado	45	54	.455	21

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

15

From Page 24

6-1, 6-2.

Seung Woo "Henry" Choi also was victorious against Guam's Aki Matsuno, 6-2, 6-1.

In the girls 16 and under, Sikkel lost to Palau's Galyah Mikel, 0-6, 0-6, and Hannah Chae lost to Guam's Leila Mercado, 4-6, 1-6, in the girls 14 and under age group.

In an all-CNMI match, Wang Hoo beat Anna Kwon, 6-3, 6-2.

Tsukagoshi secured his place in the POJC after blanking FSM's Maya Artui Neth, 6-0, 6-0, in the girls 12 and under.

In the boys 12 and under, Kadokura got the better of compatriot Jeong Woo "Ryan" Choi, 6-1, 6-1.

Irin Chung vented out her frustration in not making the cut to Fiji by dominating Sorai Nakamura, 6-0, 6-0.

After an absence of two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a total of 19 junior netters from the Northern Marianas are seeing action in the 2022 North Pacific Regional Championships.

They are duking it out against 16 players from Guam, six players from the Federated States of Micronesia, and five players from Palau.

KELVIN

From Page 24

my friends and family about my age and I'm aware. Mentally and physically, I know how far I can push my body and my mind is also aware of what can happen if I don't adapt or have a plan. All my fights, these contests against another human, mean so much to me. I love to compete and I'm feeling really good," he said.

Fitial is also inviting his family, friends, and fight fans to watch him fight next week in Australia.

"To all my friends and family, you can watch me on HEX 23 on Friday, Aug. 5, 2022. I'll be in Melbourne Pavilion, Flemington Victoria, Australia or on FITE.TV," he said.

Shake "Pikaboo" Alvarez will serve as Fitial's cornerman against Faja in Hex Fight Series 23.

TEQBALL

From Page 24

the National Federation Development Program, which provides financial assistance to each federation amounting to €6,000 ($6,100 plus) for one year. Under the same initiative, FITEQ will conduct courses to support the federation's administrative and technical programs, while there will also be grants available for hosting events and competition. FITEQ will provide NFs equipment too, such as teqball tables and balls.

Klinger also mentioned FITEQ's Club Development Program, which is open to schools, universities, and profit and non-profit organizations. Countries availing of this program will receive a container full of teqball tables (about 20) and will also have access to the sport's online education platform.

To qualify for FITEQ's Club Development Program, a federation must establish 15 clubs and each of them should have at least four athletes. Each club is also required to have a social media account to help spread the word about the sport not just in the NMI, but the rest of the world.

"We are excited to introduce teqball in the NMI. Teqball has enjoyed strong growth over the last few years as a result of increasing athlete participation, a growing competition calendar, an expanding fanbase and the ongoing development of strategic partnerships," Klinger said.

She added that teqball is recognized by the Organization of Sport Federations of Oceania, Olympic Council of Asia, and Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa, and received a "member status" from the Global Association of International Sport Federations, moving the sport a step toward recognition from the International Olympic Committee.

Teqball is also under consideration for the sports program lined up for the 2023 Micronesian Games that will be held in the Marshall Islands.

"We want to strengthen our presence in the Micronesian region that's why we requested for teqball to be included in the Micronesian Games," Klinger said.

Meanwhile, Tan thanked Klinger for reaching out and said that NMSA is open to further discussions about the sport and how it can be introduced to the community.

Harden, 76ers make it official on 2-year, $68M deal

PAGE 21

Saipan Tribune
Sports

National tennis team to do their best in Fiji

PAGE 23

15 junior netters assured slots to Fiji

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The CNMI delegation to the 2022 North Pacific Regional Championships in Guam pose for a group photo at the Guam National Tennis Center in Dededo.

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

National coach Jeff Race is in Cloud 9 once more after most of the CNMI's contingent to the 2022 North Pacific Regional Championships in Guam punched their tickets to the 2022 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships in Lautoka, Fiji.

Junior netters who secured a Top 4 finish in the NPRC currently held at the Guam National Tennis Center in Dededo automatically earn a trip to Fiji.

CNMI bets who are going include boys 16 and under's Minsoo "David" Kwon, girls 16's Serin Chung and Savita Sikkel, boys 14's La Hunn Lam, Nason Wessel, Henry Choi, and Siwoo Lee, girls 14's Hoo Wang, Hannah Chae, and Anna Kwon, boys 12's Yutaka Kadokura, Ian Chae, Ryan Choi, and Jihun Park, and girls 12's Lina Tsukagoshi.

Asked what his reaction was to 15 of his 19 junior netters making it to this year's POJC, Race said, "My biggest thought about 15 of 19 going to Fiji is how the heck are we going to pay for it?"

As far as results in Day 4 of the NPRC, as expected Race's wards continued to chug along in spectacular fashion.

Kwon won his fourth consecutive match after beating fellow CNMI netter Cody Shimizu, 6-1, 6-2, in the boys 16 and under.

Lam also remained undefeated after the Wimbledon veteran beat Federated States of Micronesia's Daniel Dontrick, 6-0, 6-0, in the boys 14s.

Wessel also got the better of compatriot June Yu after a drawn-out match, 7-6, 1-6, 11-9, in the same age group.

Lee, meanwhile, ran roughshod of Guam's Hilary Toves,

See 15 on Page 23

Kelvin to take on Aussie foe in Hex 23

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Kelvin "The Big Hit" Fitial will try to get back into the win column when he takes on Aussie newcomer Junior Tafa in Hex Fight Series 23 set for Aug. 5 in Melbourne, Australia.

The 38-year-old Fitial has the advantage in terms of experience as he comes into the 265-lb heavyweight fight with a 15-12-2 win-loss-draw card.

The 25-year-old Tafa, meanwhile, only has a match under his belt, which he won. Like Fitial, the Queensland native is also 6'3" in height.

Fitial, who is fighting out of Trench Tech Gym, Marianas Elite, and Four Seasons Martial Arts & Fitness, has lost his last four mixed martial arts fights.

Last April, Aaron Bush beat Fitial via submission in B2 Fighting Series 157 in Lexington, Kentucky.

A month before that in March, the CNMI's pride lost to Dominique Steele via unanimous decision in B2 Fighting Series 152 in West Virginia.

In August 2021, Fitial was knocked out cold by Rakim Cleveland in B2 Fighting Series 132 in Kentucky.

Curiously, Fitial's losing streak started in the Land Down Under when he succumbed to Ben Sosoli in Hex Fight Series 18 in March 2019.

Fitial's last win in the octagon was when the former CNMI national basketball player defeated Peter Miyasaki in Rites of Passage 21 "Throwdown" on Saipan in May 2017.

A little over a week before his matchup against Faja, Fitial said he will treat the upcoming match like his previous 27 other fights.

"It means a lot to me. I've learned to win, and I've learned to lose. This is neither a last chance nor a redemption fight. To me, this is fight No. 28, another swim in the ocean to see how far I can go this time."

At 38 years old, Fitial said he still has a lot left in the tank.

"I'm always reminded by

See KELVIN on Page 23

Teqball federation seeking NMI's interest in new sport

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The International Federation of Teqball (FITEQ) seeks to gauge the NMI's interest in teqball—a sport that combines the elements of football and table tennis and is played on a curved table.

Zita Klinger, FITEQ's continental development manager for Asia & Oceania, visited Saipan last month during the 2022 Northern Pacific Mini Games and met with Northern Marianas Sports Association president Jerry Tan to ask for NMSA's assistance in the introduction of teqball to the NMI.

"We are keen for your support and your proposal on the best possible way to establish a teqball federation in your island," Klinger said.

As part of its efforts in establishing federations across the globe, Klinger added that FITEQ has developed a couple of initiatives that will create sustainable and active federations. One of them is

See TEQBALL on Page 23

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Zita Klinger, right, the International Federation of Teqball's continental development manager for Asia & Oceania, presents a FITEQ event shirt to Northern Marianas Sports Association president Jerry Tan at the conclusion of the Pacific Games Council General Assembly last month at Kensington Hall.